'We jointly believe legislative authorization OKs payments of retirees' bonuses' PAGE 2
CHCC: We have an adequate supply of vaccines. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

# Saipan Tribune

$1

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXII, Issue No. 47

www.saipantribune.com | TUESDAY MARCH 8, 2022 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

# Man found lifeless at construction site

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A man who was found lying lifeless at an RNV construction site in Chalan Kanoa over the weekend was later pronounced dead on arrival at the Commonwealth Health Center's emergency room.

According to Department of Public Safety spokesperson Dre Pangelinan, DPS officers responded last Friday to a report of a man who was lying

See MAN on Page 4

## AT A GLANCE

As of 7:37pm, March 7, 2022

### VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Additional Dose Vaccinated: 57.4%

Days since last community transmission: 2

| Pfizer/BioNTech | |
|---|---|
| Initiated: | 37,984 |
| Fully Vaccinated: | 37,169 |
| **Moderna** | |
| Initiated: | 5,343 |
| Fully Vaccinated: | 5,203 |
| **Janssen** | |
| Fully vaccinated: | 1,145 |
| Additional Dose: | 21,416 |

| GUAM | OLD | NEW | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive | 45,542 | 0[1] | 45,542 |
| Recovered | 41,211 | 0[1] | 41,211 |
| Active | 4,000 | 0[1] | 4,000 |
| Deaths | 331 | 0[1] | 331 |

| SAIPAN | OLD | NEW | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive | 10,074 | 81[2] | 10,155 |
| Recovered | 9,481 | 210 | 9,691 |
| Active | 353 | 81 | 434 |
| Deaths | 30 | 0 | 30 |

[1]No update [2]3/7=29; 3/6=52

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

## COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

**LEGEND:**
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

*Source: Office of the Governor*

## GES' Maria Enriquez is NMI's top speller

### Hopwood, Dandan students took home second, third top spots

After 20 rounds, Maria Enriquez of Garapan Elementary School took home the top honors in the 2022 CNMI Public School System's State Level Spelling Bee.

See GES' on Page 4

PSS
From left: Mary Joy Viloria (third place), Maria Enriquez (first place), and Walter Josh N. Clave (second place). More photos on Page 5

**NMC PRESENTS MASTER PLAN**

NMC
Northern Marianas College officials, including NMC board chair Charles Cepeda and president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, EdD, met with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Finance Secretary David Atalig, and governor's authorized representative Patrick Guerrero to present the college's Facilities Master Plan that lays out the long-term development plan for NMC's campus. Also present at the meeting was NMC vice president for Administration and Advancement Frankie Eliptico, NMC chief financial officer David J. Attao, NMC Capital Improvement Projects director Rachel Fusco, NMC Human Resources director Polly Masga, NMC director of the Office of the President Kevin Bautista, NMC board of regents chairperson Charles Cepeda, and NMC regent Jesse Tudela.

## MVA: Over 2K tourists in Feb.

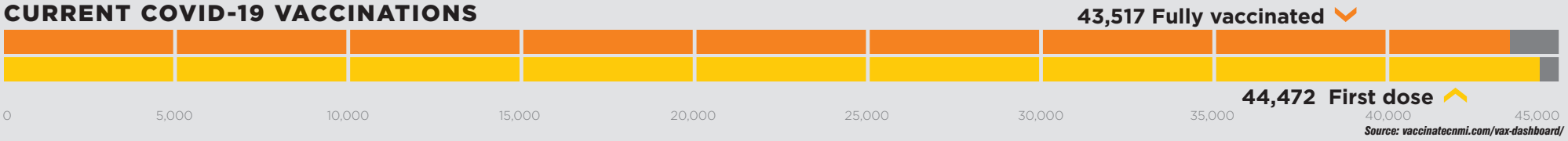
By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As the number of omicron cases in South Korea continues to decline, many of its residents are starting to travel again, with the CNMI starting to see an increasing number of Korean tourists traveling to Saipan to visit.

According to Judy Torres, Marianas Visitors Authority acting managing director, in February alone, the CNMI saw about 2,663 visitors from South Korea. This was a sig-

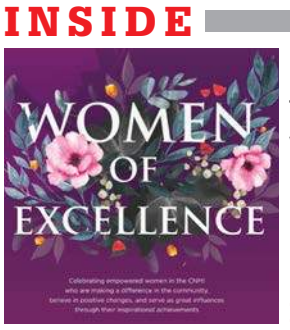
See MVA on Page 4

## CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS




*Source: vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/*

## INSIDE




**SUPPLEMENT**
Today's issue comes with a pullout supplement celebrating International Women's Day.
Page 9

**BUSINESS**
If you build a shiny new office building, will your employees show up to work in it?
Page 25

**WORLD**
Russia announces a ceasefire and the opening of humanitarian corridors in several areas.
Page 26

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

# Local

## FINANCE, TORRES, OAG, SETTLEMENT FUND

# ‘We jointly believe legislative authorization OKs payments of retirees’ bonuses’

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Finance Secretary David DLG. Atalig has assured Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) that Finance eagerly awaits legislative action to permit the use of general fund resources for the payment of $1,000 bonuses for government retirees.

In a March 1 letter to Hofschneider, Atalig said that, once granted the authority by the Legislature, Finance stands ready to establish the business unit within the general fund and work with the administration to reprogram from within the Executive Branch the necessary general fund resources.

Atalig

He said this is in compliance with existing provisions governing reprogramming and under the mandates of Public Law 22-08 and the Commonwealth Code.

Atalig sought Hofschneider’s support in securing the necessary legislative authorization, saying this would allow Finance to release the bonus payments to retirees.

Atalig said a path forward that they have discussed in permitting Finance, through legislative resolution, to establish a business unit for the bonus payments, would allow for the administration to utilize its existing reprogramming authority to locate and transfer general fund resources to support this payment to the retirees.

Atalig said that, based on their communication, Finance, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, the Office of the Attorney General, and the Settlement Fund Trustee jointly believe that this authority to establish a business unit and conduct the needed reprogramming to provide for the retirees’ bonus is the best course of action in seeing the retirees receive the support they need and can be achieved without the need for further appropriation.

Atalig said the Senate Joint Resolution 22-05 resolved this request and that they support the Senate’s proposed Senate joint resolution to increase the retirees bonus amount to $1,000.

Last Dec. 14, Torres requested the Legislature to allow reprogramming of funds for the sole purpose of funding retirees’ $500 bonuses. The following day, the Senate adopted Senate Joint Resolution 22-05, which approved Torres’ request.

Last Jan. 12, the House did not act on the Senate Joint Resolution 22-05 and, instead, unanimously passed a bipartisan legislation, House Bill 22-91, HD1, that proposes to amend the Appropriations Act of Fiscal Year 2022 to establish a business unit and allocate $1.3 million in local funds to pay the $500 bonus for each government retiree.

Last Feb. 3, the Senate unanimously passed their version of the bill, with amendments offered by Hofschneider to increase the bonus to $1,000.

Last Feb. 22, the House unanimously rejected the Senate’s version of the bill. Democrat representatives opposed a language in the Senate’s version that will give Torres’ 100% reprogramming authority of the budget.

All 20 representatives agreed to the creation of a conference committee that will hammer out with the Senate a mutually acceptable bill for retirees’ bonuses.

**RELATED NEWS**

Manglona pushes appointment of conferees for retirees’ bonuses. PAGE 5

# Power interruption today in Garapan

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public that there will be a scheduled power service interruption today, March 8, 2022, from 9am to 1pm, affecting Garapan Beach Road (Morae Kitchen & Bar and Chaioti Pl.).

This will allow CUC to replace a rotted dead-end wood primary power pole and to relocate transformers near the Morae Kitchen & Bar (former China House Restaurant) along Beach Road.

No water well or wastewater facility will be affected.

CUC continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.comlCommonwealthUtilities-Corporation/). ***(PR)***


JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Chief Accountant – JMC-2022-01, Saipan, CNMI

**CHIEF ACCOUNTANT,**
**Joeten Motor Company, Inc., Saipan, CNMI**

Consolidate and Prepares company monthly departmental Financial Statements inconformity with general accepted accounting principle (GAAP) acceptable to United States, prepare company budget and monitoring budget versus actual expenses. Performs General Ledger posting, reconciliation, prepare balance sheet schedule on a monthly basis, such as preparation of Fixed assets lapsing schedule, pre-payments, accruals of expenses. Review and compiles Financial Statements for various individual and corporate clients in conformity with auditors requirements. Review and in-charge in the calculation of CNMI and federal government taxes on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis, Responds to CNMI Revenue and IRS letters and prepares necessary documents needed to correct and comply tax filing. In-charge in the cost accounting, accountable for the ongoing analysis of process constraints, target costing projects, margin analysis, and tracing costs back to underlying activities. The cost accountant must also construct and monitor those cost-effective data accumulation systems needed to provide an appropriate level of costing information to management. Coordinate physical inventory counts and cycle counts, Investigate cycle counting variances and resolve issues, Update standard costs in the bill of materials, Review standard and actual costs for inaccuracies, Validate the cost of goods sold as part of the month-end close, Accumulate and apply overhead costs as required by generally accepted accounting principles, Work with the materials review board to locate and dispose of obsolete inventory. Conduct ongoing process constraint analyses, Report on breakeven points by products, work centers, and factories, Report on margins by product and division, Report on periodic variances and their causes, focusing in particular on spending variances, Analyze capital budgeting requests, Perform cost accumulation tasks as a member of the target costing group. Prepares recommendations to the top management, with regards to meeting company budget, cost cutting measures, and help in the implementation of company set policies.

**Minimum Requirements:** Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Finance, or related field, foreign educational equivalent accepted, plus 2 years experience in general accounting functions and 2 yrs experience in managerial position. Able to supervise accounting and administrative staff. Knowledge in preparing Consolidated Financial Statement in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principle (GAAP). Knowledge in local, state and federal tax preparation. Good oral and communication skills. Good interpersonal qualities.

**Salary: $ 18.50 per hour.**

**Workplace:** BEACH ROAD SAN JOSE VILLAGE, JOETEN MOTORS BUILDING Saipan, CNMI

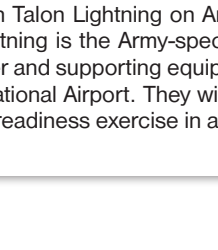
To apply: Please send your resume to Joeten Motor Company, Inc., PO BOX 500680, Saipan, MP 96950 or e-mail to josephine_b@joetenmotors.com Job Number – **JMC-2022-01**


# Santos pre-files legislative initiative to push no delay in the impeachment trial process

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) pre-filed yesterday a legislative initiative to propose a constitutional amendment to Article II, Section 8 of the NMI Constitution to ensure that the impeachment trial hearing process is initiated without undue delay.

Santos stated in the initiative that the Constitution provides for the impeachment of executive and judicial officers of the Commonwealth and that the process is under the Senate’s jurisdiction, but the Constitution is silent as to when the Senate shall initiate the process to hear the Articles of Impeachment. Santos said the Constitution is also silent on who shall be the presiding judge in the Senate.


Santos

She said impeaching a governor is serious, not simply because it may ultimately remove the head of the Commonwealth but also because it amounts to reversing the decision of a majority of the electorate.

Under Santos’ legislative initiative, the Senate shall initiate the impeachment trial hearing process by adopting the Senate Impeachment Rules within 10 working days after receiving the Articles of Impeachment.

The Senate shall then schedule the impeachment trial hearing within 30 calendar days after adopting the impeachment rules.

The NMI Supreme Court chief justice or designee shall preside over the impeachment hearing in the Senate chamber.

Legislative initiatives need the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members of each House present and voting before a proposed amendment to the Constitution can be placed before the people for ratification.

Last January, citing the absence of specific constitutional authority or directive, the CNMI Supreme Court declined Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider’s (R-Tinian) request for Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro or his designee to preside over the impeachment trial of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres.

**THAAD REMOTE LAUNCH PACKAGE** U.S. AIR FORCE/STAFF SGT. DIVINE COX

U.S. Air Force airmen from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, load the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense, assigned to Task Force Talon, equipment onto a C-17 Globemaster III during Operation Talon Lightning on Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, last March 4, 2022. Operation Talon Lightning is the Army-specific portion of the exercise. Task Force Talon deployed one THAAD launcher and supporting equipment and personnel as a THAAD Remote Launch package to Rota International Airport. They will establish a firing position, tactical communication, conduct a deployment readiness exercise in austere conditions, and demonstrate the new RL capability.

# CHCC: We have an adequate supply of vaccines

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention approving another shot for those who are considered moderately to severely immunocompromised, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. wants to assure the community that the CNMI has an adequate supply of vaccines on hand.

According to CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña, although there is a mass COVID-19 vaccination site at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center and an ongoing traveling COVID-19 vaccine community outreach, the CNMI is on top of its supply of COVID-19 vaccines and can currently handle the demand for majority to get vaccinated and boosted.

Currently, Muña said, the CNMI has hundreds of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines in its inventory and can adequately provide boosters, as well as the first two initial doses for those who may need it.

Dr. Lily Muldoon, CHCC public health medical director, said a shortage of COVID-19 vaccines isn't a limitation for the CNMI.

"We have hundreds of doses for both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines available. I think that we really have the ability to provide vaccines for anybody who decides to get vaccinated or get their booster. If we start to have any signal that we are running low because of demand, our vaccine team is on top of it. I don't think that [running low on vaccines] is a current limitation or worry of ours," she said.

Last week, the CDC approved the first booster for those moderately to severely immunocompromised. However, only the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been approved as boosters for those considered immunocompromised.

Muldoon noted, however, that she sees the CDC approving a second booster for the general public soon.

"I see that as a definite possibility. We follow what the CDC guidelines instruct us. I think similar to the way the

See CHCC on Next Page

# Torres mum on Hocog-Manglona fight

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has refused to comment about last week's Senate session during which Sens. Victor B. Hocog (R-Rota) and Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) engaged in a shouting match that nearly ended in a fistfight during the session's recess in the Senate chamber.

In an interview Wednesday, Torres said at this point it is best that he rather not comment about the Hocog-Manglona spat because the impeachment proceeding is still ongoing.

**» Hofschneider says it was his office that hired McDoulett**

Torres said he has not spoken to Hocog, Manglona, and any other senators as to what the Impeachment Rules are. He said it is best that he will go through that impeachment process.

The governor said with respect to the impeachment issue, he has no communication with senators. He said his communication with senators is only when there are government functions such as the recent Divert Airfield project groundbreaking on Tinian, or proclamation signing, which he is happy to be part of that.

Torres also said he is not paying the legal services of former Federal Bureau of Investigation special agent Joe McDoulett, who served as special counsel for the Senate in the impeachment proceedings.

During Monday's Senate special session's public comment portion, Rep. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) said the fact that McDoulett was hired as special counsel to draft up the Impeachment Rules and personally participated as the joint committee's counsel during their meeting Friday instead of the two Senate counsel is contradictory to and is a betrayal of the CNMI Constitution.

"The question I ask is who is providing direct or indirect funding for special counsel, Joe McDoulett? Is it the governor? The mayor of Tinian? Or the Senate leadership?" Babauta asked.

Senate president Jude U. Hofchneider (R-Tinian) said that his office hired the services of McDoulett to assist in the drafting of the Impeachment Rules and in the proceedings.

# Massive Hawaii taro root could be largest ever harvested

**KAILUA-KONA, Hawaii** (AP)—A super-sized taro root has been harvested on Hawaii's Big Island.

The 50-pound corm, which is the root of a taro plant, was grown on Aina 'Ahiu Farm in Hawaii Island's South Kona district and could possibly be the largest on record, West Hawaii Today reported Wednesday.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture says taro plants usually weigh between 1 and 2 pounds. This one—including corm, stalk and leaves—weighed close to 100 pounds.

Clarence and Nellie Medeiros, who harvested the plant, said it could feed about 180 people.

The couple plans to submit the specimen to the Guinness Book of World Records.

The current Guinness record is a 7 pound root grown in China in 2009.

The entire taro plant can be eaten, not just the root, in a variety of Hawaiian dishes from the staple poi to lau lau and squid luau, both of which include taro leaves.

The bottom of the plant, the huli, can be planted again after harvest and the plant will grow again.

"We are doing it with a purpose and to keep it going for generations," Clarence said. "Our grandsons are putting the Huli back. It comes full circle. Different generations feeding the next generations."

KARIDAT
A Northern Mariana Islands Social Service
RE-ANNOUNCEMENT
JOB VACANCY

ONE (1) SHELTER WORKER

For more information, job description and application can be obtained from Karidat Main Office at Sister Remedios Community Center Chalan Kanoa.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED: Complete application form, copy of diploma, resume, police clearane valid within 6 months and a copy of valid CNMI driver's license.

NO PHONE INQUIRIES PLEASE.
CLOSING DATE: FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 2022 AT 4:00PM

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp

Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Richard V.Salas
Director, DCRM

NOTICE OF CRM PUBLIC HEARING

RESOURCES MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION (RMIC) RESUMPTION OF ROCK CRUSHING AND ROCK QUARRY OPERATIONS PERMIT APPLICATION NO. SMS-2022-015

The Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) will be holding a public hearing for the proposed resumption of RMIC's Rock Crushing and Rock Quarry Operations project at As Matuis, Saipan.

Resources Management International Corporation (RMIC) is proposing to resume the rock crushing and rock quarry operations. The project includes extracting raw corals and limestone materials. The project site is situated on public land identified as Lot No. 069 A 01, measuring approximately 20,000 square meters.

The public hearing for this project is scheduled on **Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at 5:00PM**, at the **BECQ 2nd Floor Main Conference Room, Gualo Rai Center, Middle Road, Lower Gualo Rai, Saipan.**

Due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19 and to ensure the health and safety of all, virtual public participation is highly encouraged via video conferencing through Zoom link: hhtps://zoom.us/j (Meeting ID: 6706648315). Our Zoom meeting access code may change, please call the DCRM Permitting Office at (670) 664-8300 for connection assistance at least one-day prior to the public hearing date.

If you are unable to attend, written comments can be submitted to the DCRM Office, Suite 305, Gualo Rai Center, Middle Road, Gualo Rai, Saipan, or mailed to the Division of Coastal Resources Management, P.O. Box 501304, or sent by fax at 664-8315, or by email at ssablan@dcrm.gov.mp. The project files are open for review and comments during regular business hours from 7:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday. All written and oral comments received by DCRM will be included as part of the permit application records and will be considered in any decisions concerning the proposed projects. Please contact the DCRM at 664-8300/1 if you have any questions or would like to learn more about the RMIC Rock Crushing and Rock Quarry Operations project.

/s/ Richard V. Salas
Director
Division of Coastal Resources Management

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514 | Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp | Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net
Tels: (670) 233-9447
233-9448
233-9449
233-9450
Fax: (670) 234-9451

PUBLIC NOTICE
02/22/2022

Notice for Public Comment
Reprogramming of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds

| Program Year: | Program | Activity Name: | Subrecipient: | Approved Budget: | Proposed Reprogramming Amount: | Proposed Revised Project Budget: | Current IDIS Funded Amount: |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PY 2020 | CDBG | CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS) Purchase of Personal, Protective, Equipment | CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services | $106,000.00 | ($106,00.00) | $0.00 | $106,000.00 |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | **Total Reprogrammed from Activities:** | | **$106,00.00** | **$106,00.00** | | |
| NEW | CDBG | CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS) Purchase of (2) Watercraft Rescue Units and (2) All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) | CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services | $0.00 | $106,00.00 | $106,000.00 | $0.00 |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | **Total Reprogrammed from Activities:** | | | **$106,00.00** | | |

The new project is considered a Public Services project which is subject to a 15% cap of the CDBG grant estimated allocation of $970,416.00 and remains within the cap. Our agency through its Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) publishes a "Public Notice" on reprogramming of funds over $100,001.00. Therefore, comments from the general public should be submitted to NMHC Central office located in Garapan, Saipan, and in the Rota and Tinian Field Offices, on or before March 25, 2022 no later than 4:30 P.M. You may contact Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Ms. Tricia Tenorio, Planner at (670)234-6866/9447.

**"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"**

# COVID update: 81 new cases; 10 hospitalized

A combined 81 new cases of COVID-19 have been reported in the last two days, while 10 individuals are hospitalized as a result of COVID-19, based on the latest report from the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

CHCC reported last night that 29 additional individuals have been confirmed positive for COVID-19, bringing the CNMI total to 10,155 cases since March 26, 2020. Some duplicates were deleted.

Of the 29 cases, 24 were identified on March 6, 2022, and five prior to March 6, 2022. The day before, CHCC reported 52 cases that were all identified on March 5, six of them on Tinian. The vaccination statuses of the 81 cases are pending verification.

As of March 7, 2022, there were 10 individuals hospitalized as a result of COVID-19. Eight of them were vaccinated and two were partially vaccinated. One of the 10 is on a ventilator.

Of the total 10,155 cases that have been identified in the CNMI, as of March 6, 2022, there have been 9,691 recoveries; 434 active cases; and 30 COVID-19-related deaths. A total of 9,469 were identified via community testing and 686 via travel testing.

A total of 113 COVID-19 tests were conducted on March 6, 2022: 79 via Community-Based Testing; 29 at Koblerville COVID-19 Community Center; and five at the Rota Health Center. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

## 500 Sails wishes happy birthday to master navigator

500 Sails wishes a very happy birthday to one of its master navigators, Mario Benito, who is a senior sakman leader (boatbuilder) at 500 Sails and was instrumental in launching the free Sunday Sails program in October 2020. Sunday Sails gives the public the unique opportunity to experience sailing on a traditional canoe and even learn how to sail.

Born and raised on the island of Polowat in Chuuk, Benito is a highly respected leader who brings over 47 years of navigational experience into the fold. Having joined 500 Sails 16 months ago, Benito wanted the opportunity to realize a dream that both he and 500 Sails hope to bring to the forefront—to bring more canoes out on the water and teach the CNMI community how to sail.

"As we celebrate his birthday, we would like to pay homage to the added value his work has brought to the community. A humble man, [he is] well loved by his 500 Sails family and friends alike," said a 500 Sails news release.

It said that since he was 4 years old, Benito had been sailing with his father, uncles, and his grandfather, Taworhu Onopey, and had trained for years under the tutelage of some of the most famous Grand Master Polowat navigators, including the late Hipour Ewoluth (Edward), Manipey Rapang, Teo Onopey, and Rainam Edward, who, in particular, had performed his Pwo ceremony in Guahan in 2016. ***(PR)***

## PCG sets consular mission to Saipan

The Philippine Consulate General in Agana, Guam will be conducting a consular outreach mission on Saipan for three days later this month.

In a news release yesterday, the Philippine Consulate General said its Saipan consular outreach will be held from March 25 to March 28 2022, at the Sun Palace Hotel in Susupe, from 8:30am to 4:30pm.

Biometrics and personal data capture for ePassport applications will be according to the schedule prepared by the Philippine Consulate General. All ePassport applicants are reminded to check their respective schedule by contacting the following numbers: (670) 285-4388 or (670) 483-6023.

Due to the current health protocols being implemented on Saipan, the following shall be observed and implemented:

1. Only applicants who have secured their appointment will be allowed at the venue, no escort(s), except for persons with disabilities and minor applicants;
2. Applicants are advised to show up at the venue on the date and time indicated in the schedule;
3. Wearing of mask and physical distancing will be strictly observed; and
4. Passport applicants should wear proper attire (i.e. with collar and sleeves) for data capture purposes.

For consular services, including passport renewal, that require civil registration documents (e.g. birth certificate and marriage certificate), only documents from the Philippine Statistics Authority or its predecessor, the National Statistics Office, will be accepted.

The mobile consular outreach team will also offer other consular services such as notarization/legalization, civil registry, and acceptance of dual citizenship applications.

Please be reminded that all consular services are strictly by appointment only. ***(PR)***

## MVA

*From Page 1*

nificant jump, Torres said, from the roughly 1,400 seen in January during South Korea's omicron surge.

"In February 2022, we received 2,663 visitors (preliminary figure) to the Marianas from Korea, compared to 1,406 visitors in January 2022 when omicron was causing a strong travel reluctance," she said.

Due to the increasing demand to travel, as seen by the large number of Korean tourists the CNMI saw in February alone, MVA has also decided to extend the TRIP program again to keep the tourism economy recovery going.

Torres explained that even though the TRIP program has been a success so far, the CNMI still has a long way to go in terms of its tourism economy gling back to pre-COVID levels.

"At this point, given current COVID-19 conditions, we can say our plan to use TRIP to jumpstart the Marianas tourism economy has been a success. However, travel worldwide remains low, so we still have a long way to recovery, including the reboot of other source markets," she said.

Although the TRIP program has been extended, MVA has stopped certain tourist incentives like Travel Bucks as tourists are more self-motivated to travel now.

"Travel Bucks ceased in February 2022, as visitors from Korea are being increasingly self-motivated to travel. At this same time, a free PCR test for visitors returning to Korea is still being offered, and we are looking at limited airline support based on load factor performance—or how many visitors airlines bring in," Torres said.

Torres explained that, as the number of visitors continue to increase, MVA gradually reduced the TRIP incentives.

"Since the program's inception in July 2021, we have seen a slow but gradual increase in the number of visitors under the program, so we have systematically been able to adjust or reduce incentives," she said.

The over 2,000 tourist seen in February is only the beginning as Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig said in a previous *Saipan Tribune* article that the CNMI is expecting to receive over 600,000 Korean tourists in the next fiscal year alone.

## MAN

*From Page 1*

lifeless at an RNV construction site near Sandy Beach Homes.

The man was rushed to CHC at around 3pm but was pronounced dead on arrival. It was reported that the man's cause of death was sudden cardiac arrest. DPS has chosen not to disclose further details of the man's identity on behalf of the grieving family.

*Saipan Tribune* learned from multiple RNV employees that the man appeared to be in his 50s but they were not aware that he had any underlying health issues.

They said they had been were working on the home construction project and they all took a break at around 12pm to eat lunch, drink some water, and rest a bit before getting back to work. During this time, they said, the deceased sat on a nearby bench and said he would rest a while as he was not feeling so well.

It was said that the man, who was a subcontractor employee for the project, asked if he could take the rest of the day off but he was not granted his request.

The witnesses said that when 1pm hit, they all headed back up to start working but decided to leave the man to rest.

However, when the workers took a short break at around 3pm, they said they noticed the man already lying lifeless where they had left him. This prompted them to call for emergency assistance.

## GES'

*From Page 1*

Hopwood Middle School's Walter Josh N. Clave of Hopwood Middle School was in second place and Dandan Middle School's Mary Joy Viloria placed third.

All top three winners—as well as school-level spelling bee winners—are eligible to compete in the regional spelling bee scheduled on March 12 in Guam.

The CNMI-wide competition is sponsored by the school district. This year's edition was held at Kensington Hotel Saipan last Saturday. There were no competitions in 2020 and 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The benefits of spelling bees extend beyond language: Since students are required to spell words while on stage, they also develop self-confidence, communication and public speaking skills, and the ability to thrive under pressure," said Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred B. Ada. "I am so glad that we are finally getting back to some sense of normalcy after two years."

For three rounds, four students from Garapan Elementary School, Dandan Middle School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, and Hopwood Middle School kept spelling all the words correctly. By round 12th, Preciouz Kenzie B. Lontoc of Francisco M. Sablan Middle School earned fourth place in the competition. For the next seven rounds, three students vied for championship trophy.

The 2022 CNMI PSS State Level Spelling Bee hosted 13 elementary and middle public schools from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

The following are the school-level winners and runners up that competed in the last Saturday's state-level competition:

1. GES school champion: Maria Enriquez
2. GES runner up: Aliyana Garcia
3. KAG school champion: Aubrey Taitano
4. KAG runner up: Jamie Pereira
5. KES school champion: Phil William L. Lumactod
6. KES runner up: Merleen Tamerang
7. OES school champion: Isabel Maximina Carreon
8. OES runner up: Chloe Rivera
9. SVS school champion: Mitsue Borja
10. SVS runner up: Kyrie Palec
11. SNP school champion: Kamea Blas
12. SNP runner up: J'Ana Hocog
13. TIN school champion: Nusrat J. Syed
14. TIN runner up: Christofe Donald Patio
15. WSR school champion: Clodia Merjilla
16. WSR runner up: Israt Jahan Jannat
17. DMS school champion: Mary Joy Viloria
18. DMS runner up: Genelyn Lansangan
19. FMS school champion: Preciouz Kenzie B. Lontoc
20. FMS runner up: Amber Faith Reyes Guevarra
21. HMS school champion: Walter Josh N. Clave
22. HMS runner up: Aryan Sheikh
23. TMS school champion: J'Dean Leilisheng Calvo
24. TMS runner up: Ry'ahna Quitan
25. TJSHS school champion: Juris Gian G. Cabarles
26. TJSHS runner up: Jenard Ivahn A. Nuyda

Giselle Butalid from the Office of Curriculum and Instruction gave the welcoming remarks and recognized the community's tremendous support for this year's event. She extended appreciation to sponsors and donors of the spelling bee: Lollipops' $50 gift certificates, Gentle Brook Cafe and Shirley's Coffee Shop, Kensington Hotel Saipan for pool passes, Monster Pizza, AC Pacific LLC dba I Love Saipan, One Legacy LLC, and NMI Museum of History and Culture.

All student competitors also received monetary donations from Saipan Marianas Corp.

The competition's pronouncer, Vinni Orsini, PSS' Social Studies Program manager,was "amazed at the talent of the students."

"I'm sure in the future, they will become walking dictionaries for our community," he said.

The judges were Jaclyn Rose Quitugua of the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, Lorraine Catienza from the Office of Instructional Technology and Distance Education, and Loremel Hocog of Kagman High School. ***(PR)***

## CHCC

*From Page 3*

first booster was rolled out, they first saved it for the highest risk individuals and then quickly over time, other people were eligible, I think it will be similar with this fourth shot. More people will be eligible over the next coming weeks or months," she said.

According to guidance from CHCC, people ages 12 years and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised and received a mRNA vaccine for their primary series (Pfizer or Moderna) should receive a total of four doses of COVID-19 vaccine.

The four doses are made up of a primary series of three doses of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, plus one booster of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, fourth dose. The mRNA booster will be given at least three months after the third dose of a mRNA vaccine.

People ages 18 years and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised and received the first dose of Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 vaccine should get a second dose of either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccines

They should also receive a booster, also an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, in most situations given at least two months after the second dose for a total of three doses.

# Manglona pushes appointment of conferees for retirees' bonuses

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) has introduced a resolution to request Senate president Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) to appoint the conferees that will represent the Senate at a conference committee that will hammer out with the House of Representatives a mutually acceptable bill for the government retirees' $1,000 bonuses.

Manglona told Saipan Tribune yesterday that, as of the Senate's session last Thursday, Hofschneider has yet to appoint conferees and that he does not know why.

In his Senate Resolution 22-18 that was co-sponsored by Sen. Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan), Manglona said Hofschneider should appoint the Senate conferees to begin the dialogue and reach an amicable compromise so that the retirees can be given their $1,000 bonuses.

The senator also asked the Senate to support and approve the proposed House Bill 22-91 in the form of HD1, SS1, CCSI, that the House conferees recently introduced for the payment of the retirees' $1,000 bonuses.

Manglona

Last Feb. 22, the House rejected the Senate's version of the bill that also gave Torres 100% reprogramming authority.

House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) then appointed Reps. Donald Manglona (Ind-Rota), Blas Jonathan Attao (R-Saipan), and Corina Magofna (D-Saipan) to serve as House conferees.

Manglona said the House conferees already met with the Senate minority bloc and began talks on ways to expedite a resolution so that the retirees can get their bonus soon.

The Rota senator said the group both agreed that both chambers have concurred with raising the bonus to $1,000 instead of the $500, as previously proposed.

He said the group both agreed that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres does not require the 100% reprogramming authority after Finance Secretary David DLG. Atalig told the House Committee on Ways and Means that Torres' 25% reprogramming authority, as provided in the Planning and Budgeting Act, is sufficient to cover the full amount of $2,626,000 that is required for the $1,000 retirees' bonus.

Manglona said the proposed conference committee's substitute bill will re-appropriate $2.62 million in local funds from sources that are already identified, including provisions that were originally passed by both the House and Senate but line item vetoed by Torres and legally creates a business unit.

He said the substitute bill is also consistent with the attorney general's response to Atalig and the governor's legal counsel dated Dec. 13, 2021.

The senator said AG Edward Manibusan stated that given that the bonus is funded by general fund revenues and requires legislative appropriation to be funded pursuant to the Commonwealth Code, it is difficult to justify the bonus as "an existing essential function" of the Commonwealth.

**SCENES FROM A SPELLING BEE**

PSS

From left: Peter Loken (coach), Megan Nevitt-Loken (teacher), Maria Enriquez (2022 CNMI PSS State Level Spelling Bee champion), Mary Anne Enriquez (mother) Jomer Enriquez (father) and brother.

PSS

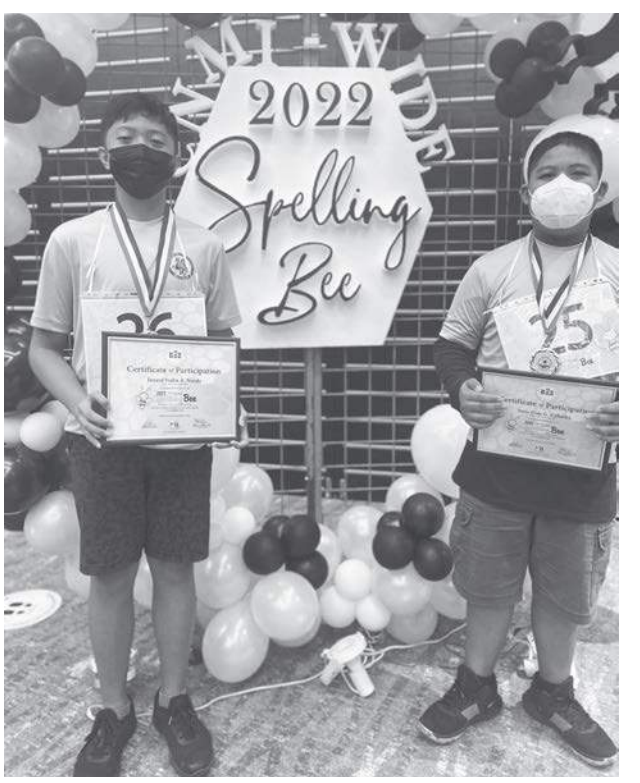
From left: Dorina Salavaria (teacher), Mary Joy Viloria (third placer), Peter Loken (coach), Maria Enriquez (first placer), Megan Nevitt-Loken (teacher), Walter Clave (third placer), Jesse Sablan (coach), Karen Manuel (Hopwood Middle School vice principal), and Eric Magofna (associate commissioner for Administrative Services)

PSS

Preciouz Kenzie B. Lontoc of Francisco M. Sablan Middle School places fourth in the 2022 CNMI Public School System's State Level Spelling Bee held at Kensington Hotel Saipan last Saturday.

PSS

Nusrat J. Syed was Tinian Elementary School's school-level Spelling Bee winner.




PSS

From left, Jenar Ivahn A. Nuyda (Tinian Junior/Senior High School school-level Spelling Bee runner up) and Jursi Gian G. Cabarles (TJSHS school-level winner).

# Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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## EDITORIAL

# America's brighter picture on COVID-19

Tuesday night's State of the Union address marked a turning point even before President Joe Biden opened his mouth. The mere sight of the president entering the House chamber without a mask captured the improved state of the pandemic in America. The White House followed up Wednesday with a new strategy that marks a smarter approach at this stage of fighting COVID-19.

The White House trumpeted its 96-page National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan as a road map for guiding Americans "back to our more normal routines." With infections and hospitalizations plummeting, and with 76 percent of the U.S. population having received at least one dose of vaccine, the new strategy addresses both the evolving threat of COVID-19 and the public's fatigue with lockdowns, school closures and various levels of isolation over the two years of this pandemic.

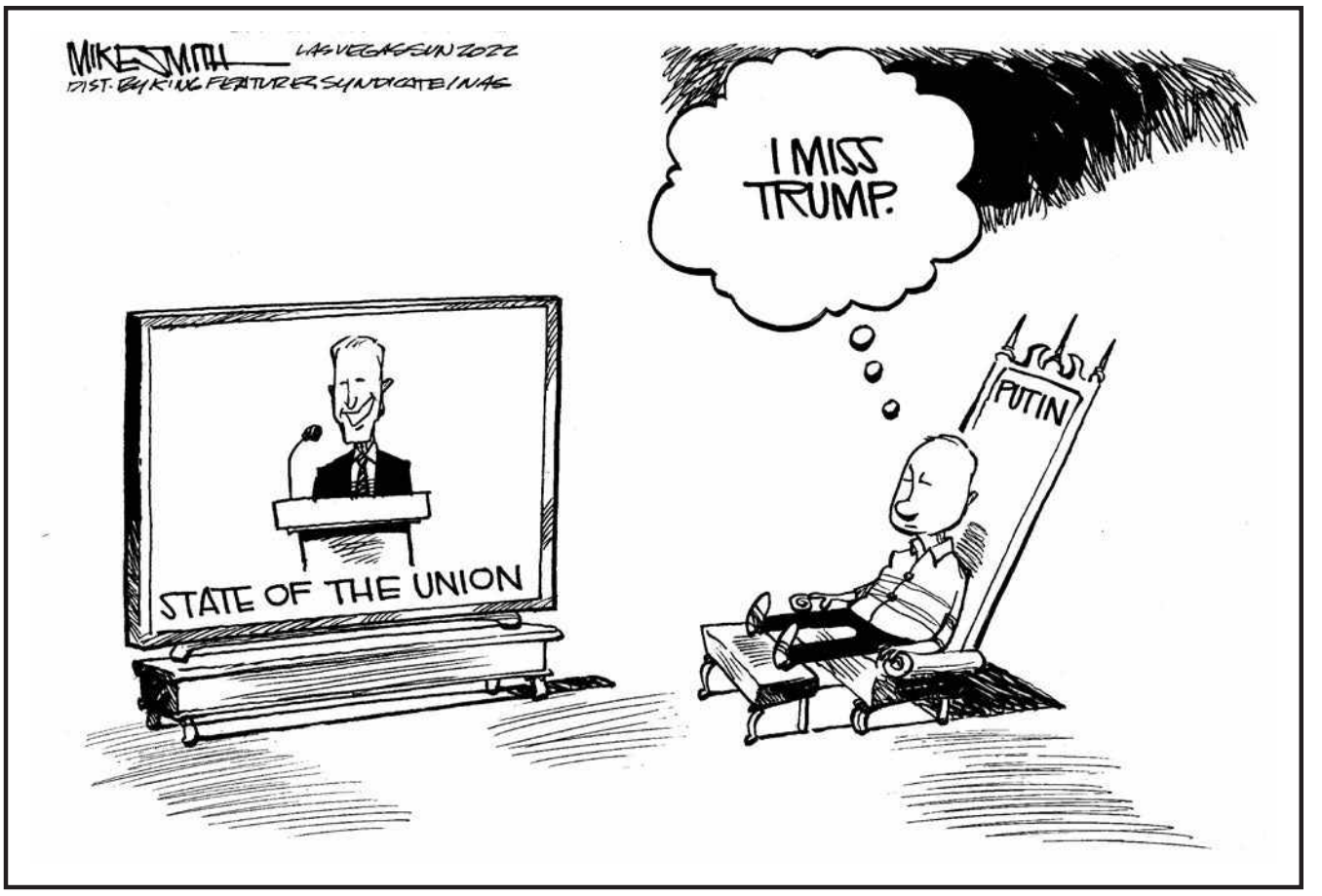
The administration's idea to switch from crisis mode to managing the outbreak is both good policy and good politics. It would continue promoting vaccines, including for America's youngest children, accelerate research on COVID variants and vastly expand testing and treatment options and make them more easily available. The government would particularly focus on protecting Americans with compromised immune systems and increase support for those suffering from long-term impacts of COVID.

The plan calls for increased funding from Congress to help schools and businesses better handle any outbreaks (think upgraded ventilation systems) and for paid sick leave and tax credits for businesses to blunt the economic costs of COVID-related absentees and closures. The administration also pledged to be "the world's arsenal for vaccines" as a means of promoting America's interests in global health and financial security.

The plan comes barely a week after the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention loosened its guidance for wearing face masks. With widespread population immunity, the CDC said, it was time to consider several indicators, including COVID-related hospital admissions, to determine the specific risks to a community. Under a new three-pronged measure, the agency said, communities can calculate whether their risks are low, medium or high, with indoor masking recommended for high-risk areas only.

Christina Pushaw, a spokesman for Gov. Ron DeSantis, reasserted the governor's skepticism about masks and contended that the federal government was "following Florida" in easing its endorsement of facial coverings. But the DeSantis administration is making false comparisons to defend its reckless, earlier policies. While the CDC estimates that more than 70 percent of the country can now end masking indoors, that's less a repudiation of masking than a reflection of how far the country has moved over two years in preventing and treating infections. And the picture is hardly rosy in Florida.

*See AMERICA'S on Next Page*




# My parents hide from shelling. My friends are making gas bombs. Ukraine needs our help

**By LISA KORNEICHUK**
Chicago Tribune

*Lisa Korneichuk, an editor and writer from Ukraine, is a Fulbright student at the School of Art Institute of Chicago.*

Let me tell you how people in Ukraine have spent the last four days.

My parents and grandma are running back and forth from the eighth floor of their apartment to the cold and dusty basement to seek safety from the constant shelling of Kyiv. My friends, artists and designers, hide in shelters during the night and prepare Molotov cocktails during the day. Many of them joined coordination forces to help the army and citizens with food and medicine.

A musician I know joined Ukraine's Territorial Defense Forces. So did major Ukrainian poet Serhiy Zhadan, popular singer Andriy Khlyvnyuk and film director Oleg Sentsov, who had spent five years in a Russian prison for a fabricated political case.

Others are waging attacks on Russian government websites, drawing anti-war posters and searching for anything to help Ukraine hold on. No one is sleeping. These are the worst days of our lives.

According to Vladimir Putin, the pretext for this war is to "denazify Ukraine." The same Ukraine that actively fought Nazism and lost more than 5 million people in World War II. Ukraine, whose current president is a Jew. The war hurt every Ukrainian family while its whole territory was occupied. My grandfather was a prisoner of the Buchenwald concentration camp. My grandmother survived famine under Nazi occupation.

Russia started the invasion of Ukraine in 2014, annexing Crimea and occupying our eastern territories using local separatist proxies supported by Russian soldiers, whose presence there the Kremlin denied. Ukraine has been fighting this war for eight years, losing its people daily, while Western media abandoned the topic. Knowing about this war, countries like Germany collaborated with Russia over Nord Stream 2, a gas pipeline bypassing Ukraine to supply Europe with gas, thus increasing the chances of escalation.

The West has shown its hypocrisy. Western nations knew what Putin had planned for Ukraine, but none wanted to waive their economic interests to prevent the impending war. Underestimating Russian media propaganda, influence and cruelty led to the ongoing tragedy.

Most recent events have shown Russian forces are not likely to stop unless there is a consolidated response from nations that do not share the Kremlin's predilection for authoritarianism, reactionism and expansionism. Events have also shown that international law means nothing to Russia.

In 2013-14, during the Euromaidan Revolution, Ukrainians were fighting for so-called European values. We wanted free elections, freedom of speech, human rights and a transparent judicial system. That's why we called it a Revolution of Dignity. That might sound naive, yet we have achieved a lot since. We have a legitimate president, supported by an actual majority of the nation. Our LGBTQ+ rallies draw thousands of people in many cities. Our news investigations of corruption lead to criminal consequences. Our cultural and club scenes have become legendary in the world. All of this is at stake right now.

That's why Ukrainians are fighting so fiercely. We are not ready to lose everything we have gained as a society since our independence simply because a deranged leader of a neighboring country is convinced that we, Ukrainians, have no right to exist. Or because the seemingly sane leaders of other powerful nations believe that we should negotiate with a bully on his terms.

We are fighting. People are stopping Russian tanks by yelling at them. A woman approached a Russian soldier and told him to put sunflower seeds in his pockets so they will grow after his body has enriched the Ukrainian soil. A man removed a land mine from a bridge with his bare hands.

But we are losing a lot. Some of our cities, especially in the east, which Putin wanted to protect from the "Ukrainian genocide," are facing a humanitarian catastrophe. People are dying there without food, water, electricity and medicine. Every city is in constant danger. Ukraine and Europe are at the brink of an environmental catastrophe after Russian troops blew up an oil depot in Kyiv uptown and occupied Chernobyl.

While I am writing this, Russians are destroying museums and cinemas, stealing our cultural heritage. Western sanctions have not worked to stop the war. A slow European Union and U.S. response is costing us too much. Every minute of hesitation supports war crimes and the killing of civilians.

Stop being sad, sorry and concerned. Act! Demand more sanctions for Russia to stop its aggression. Urge international funds to send humanitarian missions to Ukraine. Donate to humanitarian and military aid funds—yes, military, because pacifism is a privilege of those who have never heard a bomb explode near their house.

Share the news about Russian attacks on Ukraine using hashtags #StandWithUkraine and #StopPutin. And stop paying for Russian gas with Ukrainian blood—if you consider yourself a human being.

**EDITORIAL POLICY** Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

# 'Senators, we ask you to do what is right for the people'

*Editor's Note: Rep. Leila Staffler (D-Saipan), delivered the following remarks regarding the Senate Impeachment Rules during the public comment section of the Senate session Thursday, March 3, 2022.*

**By LEILA HAVEIA C. STAFFLER**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

*Leila Haveia Fleming C. Staffler is a member of the House of Representatives of the 22nd Legislature, representing Precinct 5.*

*Hafa adai, tirow*, honorable members of the Senate. My name is Leila Fleming Staffler and I am here to provide public comments on the Senate Communication 22-97 and 22-99 with respect to the Senate Impeachment Rules. I am here in my official capacity as a Precinct 5 representative in the 22nd House of Representatives.

I didn't know this, but I have come to learn that a "special counsel" virtually always means prosecutor. As defined by Black's law dictionary: 'A special counsel is the name given to the attorney who is employed to assist a state or federal attorney general in a prosecution case. A prosecutor, in practice prosecutes, brings legal action against another for a crime, in the name of the government.

Yet, Mr. McDoulett's role appears to have changed the definition of special counsel here in the Marianas. What is his role? Was it solely to craft these rules? Rules, which the current Senate counsel is more than capable to have drafted. Rules that even minority members of this body have not had input in.

Is his role to preside over every impeachment meeting? Is he acting as a pro-se chairman to facilitate these hearings himself? Is counsel McDoulett going to be advising [the] Senate president too? How is Mr. McDoulett considered a "special counsel" if they are not bringing legal action against another for a crime in the name of the government?

When I read the rules, I won't lie, I was shocked at the lengthy procedure that, at any point even prior to the actual impeachment trial proceedings, could disqualify the copious amounts of evidence that show clear and repetitive actions of felonies, corruption and neglect of duty by Gov. Torres over several years. Without the evidence to back it up, the impeachment process is incomplete.

And to think these rules were drafted by the "special counsel." Black's dictionary will have to add a new line to this definition: The name given to attorneys in the Marianas who protect the governor from being impeached through procedural detail.

One of those details hampers is in Rule 7 Appointment of Impeachment Prosecutor. The House speaker who authorized impeachment inquiry shall serve as the impeachment prosecutor. We are hampered by these rules because they bar us from choosing our own players to be on the impeachment prosecution team. It bars us from hiring our own special counsel (who would actually be a special counsel in the name of the law). Instead, we must learn to be lawyers in a month or less.

Oh wait, we don't have to learn to be lawyers in a month, just the speaker. The speaker who has been more than fair over the course of these proceedings. He has always taken neutral ground, allowing for the process to take its course. He has not stacked the deck. He has been respectful of the minority by being neutral.

This rule specifically has a chilling effect for all future speakers whose House leadership may have clear and convincing evidence to support an impeachment, whether it is for a governor or other sitting official. Forcing the speaker to carry 100% of the burden to prove the wrongdoing will make anyone think twice about even "authorizing" the impeachment process.

The impeached official has no such restriction. They can have as many counsels as they want, it appears. They have hired barrage of lawyers who are trying to build a wall of protection around this governor. Protection from who? The people want to know.

Doing what is right is never easy, but it is always the right thing to do. Senators, we ask you to do what is right for the people. Be fair. These rules, they are not fair. They skew in favor of this impeached governor. Senators, we ask you to do what is right for the people. Be fair.

# Climate action must include racial justice

**By KIMI WAITE**
PROGRESSIVE PERSPECTIVES

The White House Council of Environmental Quality recently announced that it won't directly take race into account when pursuing policies of environmental justice.

That's problematic because achieving environmental justice is essential to sustaining the life, culture and language of frontline communities. To not take race into consideration when discussing environmental justice is to deny someone's lived experience and reality.

Environmental racism, declares author Robert Bullard, is "any policy, practice or directive that differently affects or disadvantages (where intended or unintended) individuals, groups or communities based on race." This can occur when communities of color disproportionately experience environmental hazards like toxic waste facilities, garbage dumps and air pollution, resulting in detrimental health effects.

Environmental health injustices are also correlated with gender. A study found that Latina, Black, Asian and Pacific Islander mothers were more than twice as likely as white mothers to live in the most air-polluted counties in the country. More than half of all textile workers are Asian women, and they're exposed to particles, dyes, formaldehyde and arsenic, leading to high rates of respiratory illness.

As an Asian American educator, I never saw myself represented in my own K-12 curriculum. Narratives about the environment also failed to include my own lived experiences. This is unfortunate, especially because immigrant and Asian American communities have a history of involvement in issues related to environmental justice and environmental health.

Since the 1990s, the Asian Pacific Environmental Network has organized and built power among Laotian refugees and Chinese immigrants in California's Bay Area. In Chicago, the fight for environmental justice involves urban gardening.

Planting vegetables in backyard gardens gives Asian immigrant families in Chicago the ability to produce vegetables that are difficult to find at Western markets. University of Illinois researchers noted, "Chinese origin households have a higher density [of gardening] than anywhere else in the city." However, much of the soil is contaminated.

In Louisiana, the fight for historical and cultural preservation is a fight against climate change. St. Malo, a former village along Lake Borgne in Louisiana's St. Bernard Parish, was the first Filipino settlement in the United States. Louisiana has always been at the frontlines of the climate crisis and according to the U.S. Geological Survey, the state has lost about 25% of coastal land that existed in 1932. The Filipino American community is tasked with preserving its legacy in the face of environmental harm.

According to the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, Americans overwhelmingly support teaching children about climate change. The Los Angeles Unified School District's Board of Education recently unanimously approved a comprehensive Climate Literacy program for all L.A. Unified schools. New Jersey also adopted climate change as part of the core curriculum in all public schools and Maine's L.D. 1902 was introduced in 2021 and is now being considered by the legislature.

The White House clearly acknowledges that communities of color are disproportionately impacted by climate change. We can't address environmental racism without addressing race: Racial justice is environmental justice.

Removing race as a factor threatens not only environmental justice efforts but also climate justice education. Every student deserves to have their lived experiences and realities included in the classroom.

*Kimi Waite is a Civics Environmental Education fellow with the North American Association for Environmental Education. She is also a public voices fellow on the climate crisis with the OpEd Project and the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication.*

## AMERICA'S

*From Page 6*

The CDC's online threat estimator shows that the overwhelming majority of Florida still remains at high or medium risk, with the entire Tampa Bay area, and much of western Florida, still in the high-risk category.

The administration's plan has evolved to meet the risks in real-time, and by looking beyond masking and closures, it seeks to depoliticize the fight against COVID-19, which may have the most long-lasting impact on controlling the virus. The administration and the CDC will need to convey these changes in clear, simple language. That's not always been the case, which is somewhat understandable, given how scientists and public health officials struggled to calibrate their response as the COVID threat evolved. But Americans need to see how the gains in fighting the virus will improve their everyday lives. The sound policies of the last several weeks, and the encouraging visuals, should at least offer some confidence and relief to a weary nation.

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# Celebrating the uniqueness of a woman

**By ROSEMARIE D. EMBILE**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

*Rosemarie D. Embile is a teacher at the Northern Marianas International School (facebook.com/NorthernMarianasInternationalSchool).*

Celebrating Women's Month offers many reasons for women to honor and embrace who they are and not just for their remarkable achievements and meritorious contributions they have in today's society. Whatever role you have in a community, like being a mother, wife, single-blessedness, single mother, etc., each has her unique life purpose to offer this world.

As women, we all have experiences that make us the kind of person we are today, and the life we have can be the key to what we are capable of being. We serve as we learn by honoring our life experiences and sharing them with others—both men and women. When we trust our most authentic self and our inner voice, we do the same as others rely upon themselves.

To be strong as a woman, we don't have to act like a man to be effective at what we do. We should recognize our feminine form and distinctive function, unraveling our own natural strength. It lies therein, getting along with our insight, sense of compassion, and understanding our feminity's deepest side. It may not be easy to listen to our feminine side as often this is being shunned in many aspects of our everyday lives. However, if we can connect to who we are, we can discover that there might be a vast wellspring of power within us. Our ability to hear our inner guides, tap our strong intuition, look at a situation compassionately, and love others are the most significant ways to show the world the true power of our divine feminine nature. If we learn to grasp this strength in our daily lives, that can radiate the authentic energy of being a woman that we can solely give to this world.

Women's Month is an excellent way to honor and celebrate women who make a difference in every part of this world. We appreciate the uniqueness of every woman rather than seeing them as competition. Instead, we serve as a light to illuminate the world with our own torch leading life to serve humanity.

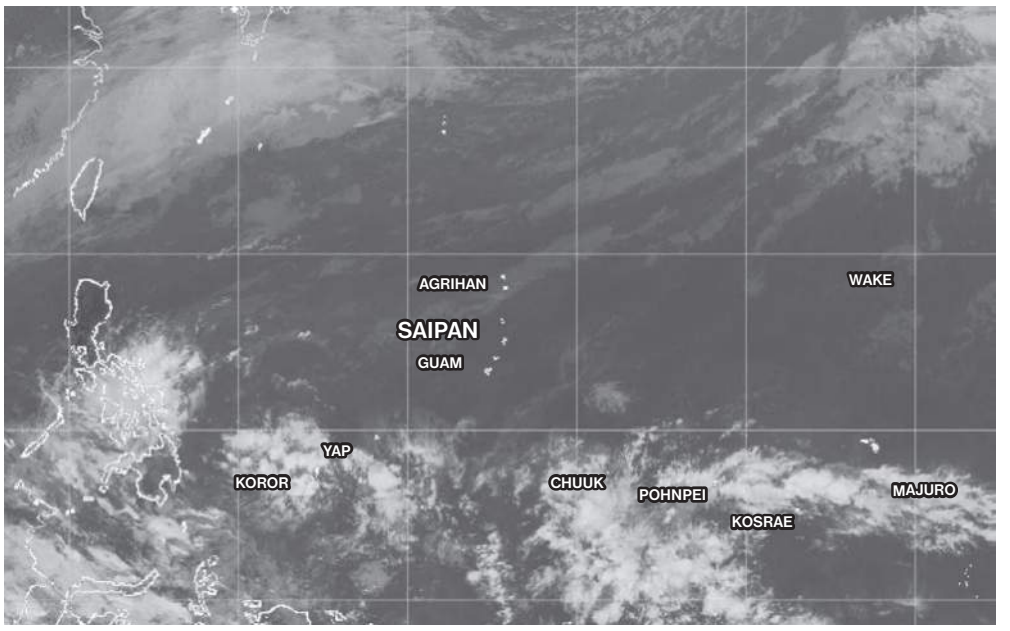
Happy Women's Month. You are beautiful by being simply who you are!

# The Weather

## 5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

| FRIDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph | Partly cloudy in the morning, becoming mostly cloudy in the afternoon. Isolated showers. | Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. | Mostly cloudy with a chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. | Mostly cloudy with a chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. . |
| 86º 78º | 86º 75 | 85º 76º | 86º 75º | 85º 76º |

## YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE




**PICTURE TIME: 5:06 AM, MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2022**

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Moderate trade winds prevail in the Marianas, bringing partly cloudy skies with isolated showers today. Ipan buoy indicates near-benign seas between 4 and 5 feet.

*Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/*

| MICRONESIA | | ▲ ▼ °F |
|---|---|---|
| Guam and Rota | Mostly Sunny | 30 / 25 °F |
| Palau | Thunderstorms | 29 / 25 °F |
| Yap | PM Thunderstorms | 29 / 26 °F |
| Chuuk | Thunderstorms | 29 / 26 °F |
| Pohnpei | Thunderstorms | 28/ 26 °F |
| Kosrae | Thunderstorms | 20 / 26 °F |
| Majuro | AM Thunderstormss | 29 / 27 °F |

| DAY | SUNRISE | SUNSET |
|---|---|---|
| Today | 06:29 AM | 18:36 PM |
| Wednesday | 06:29 AM | 18:36 PM |
| Thursday | 06:28 AM | 18:26 PM |
| Friday | 06:27 AM | 18:26 PM |
| Saturday | 06:27 AM | 18:25 PM |

| DAY | MOONRISE | MOONSET | MOONRISE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Today | 10:08 | 23:13 PM | - |
| Wednesday | 10:49 | - | - |
| Thursday | - | 11:33 PM | 11:33 |
| Friday | - | 00:57 PM | 12:20 |
| Saturday | - | 01:49 PM | 13:10 |

| AROUND THE GLOBE | | ▲ ▼ °F |
|---|---|---|
| Auckland | Partly Cloudy | 25 / 18 °F |
| Beijing | Mostly Sunny | 18 / 1°F |
| Hong Kong | Sunny | 19 / 15 °F |
| Honolulu | Partly Cloudy | 27 / 21 °F |
| London | Mostly Sunny | 11 / 6 °F |
| Los Angeles | Sunny | 21 / 8 °F |
| Manila | Partly Cloudy | 33 / 25 °F |
| Melbourne | Mostly Cloudy | 20 / 14 °F |
| Miami | Mostly Cloudy | 27 / 4 °F |
| New York | Mostly Cloudy | 9 / 2 °F |
| Osaka | Sunny | 12 / 2 °F |
| Paris | Sunny | 14 / 4 °F |
| Busan | Mostly Sunny | 14 / 4 °F |
| Rome | Sunny | 12 / 0 °F |
| Salem | PM Showers | 17 / 13 °F |
| San Francisco | Sunny | 17 / 8 °F |
| Seoul | Partly Cloudy | 11 / -1 °F |
| Tokyo | AM Clouds/PM Sun | 9 / 3 °F |
| Washington, DC | Partly Cloudy | 21 / 4 °F |

| TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY | | FEET |
|---|---|---|
| 05:18 AM | Low Tide | 0.78 |
| 10:52 AM | High Tide | 1.63 |
| 6:04 PM | Low Tide | 0.21 |
| 11:32 PM | High Tide | 1.47 |

## STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

**Continue good hand hygiene**

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

**Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic**

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

**Rumor control**

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

*Source: Office of the Governor*

**NEWS DESK** For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 14, 2022

### DEPARTURES

**SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA117 | 7:20am | 8:05am | 2, 4, 6 |
| UA117 | 9:50am | 10:35am | 1, 3, 5, 7 |

**GUAM-MANILA (MNL)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| PR 111 | 6:30am | 8:20am | 1, 3, 5 |
| UA183 | 8:00pm | 9:50pm | Daily |

**SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA117/183 | 7:20am | 9:50pm | 2, 4, 6 via Guam |
| UA117/183 | 9:50am | 9:50pm | 1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam |

**SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7C3406 | 3:10PM | 6:55PM | Every 4 days (Jan 29-Mar 30) |
| TW9308 | 3:30PM | 7:20PM | 4, 7 |
| OZ6243 | 4:00PM | 7:40PM | 3, 6 |

**SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| BX621 | 3:10PM | 6:30PM | 7 |

### ARRIVALS

**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA116 | 5:30am | 6:16am | 2, 4, 6 |
| UA116 | 8:00am | 8:46am | 7 |
| UA174 | 8:00am | 8:46am | 1, 3, 5 |

**MANILA (MNL)-GUAM**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| PR110 | 10:15pm | 4:00am+1 | 2, 4, 7 |
| UA184 | 10:40pm | 4:30am+1 | 2, 5 |
| UA184 | 10:55pm | 4:45am+1 | 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 |

**MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA184/116 | 10:40pm | 6:16am+1 | 5 via Guam |
| UA184/174 | 10:40pm | 8:46am+1 | 2 via Guam |
| UA184/116 | 10:55pm | 6:16am+1 | 1, 3 via Guam |
| UA184/174 | 10:55pm | 8:46am+1 | 4, 7 via Guam |
| UA184/116 | 10:55pm | 8:46am+1 | 6 via Guam |

**INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7C3405 | 8:30AM | 2:10PM | Every 4 days (Jan 29-Mar 30) |
| TW9307 | 9:00AM | Q2:30PM | 4, 7 |
| OZ6233 | 9:00AM | 2:30PM | 3, 6 |

**BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| BX622 | 8:00AM | 1:10PM | 7 |

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

## STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

### FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

**SAIPAN TO ROTA**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1301 | 8:30AM | 9:00AM | Daily |
| 1302 | 11:00AM | 11:30AM | Daily |
| 1303 | 1:30PM | 2:00PM | Tues/Wed/ Thurs/Fri |
| 1304 | 3:30PM | 4:00PM | Daily |

**ROTA TO SAIPAN**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3101 | 9:30AM | 10:00AM | Daily |
| 3102 | 12:00AM | 12:30AM | Daily |
| 3103 | 1:30PM | 3:00PM | Tues/Wed/ Thurs/Fri |
| 3104 | 4:30PM | 5:00PM | Daily |

**ROTA TO GUAM**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3401 | 12:15 | 12:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |

**GUAM TO ROTA**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4301 | 13:00 | 13:30 | Temporarily Unavailable |

**SAIPAN TO TINIAN**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1201 | 7:00 | 7:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1202 | 8:00 | 8:15 | Daily |
| 1203 | 9:00 | 9:15 | Daily |
| 1204 | 10:00 | 10:15 | Daily |
| 1205 | 11:00 | 11:15 | Daily |
| 1206 | 12:00 | 12:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1207 | 13:00 | 13:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1208 | 14:00 | 14:15 | Daily |
| 1209 | 15:00 | 15:15 | Daily |
| 1210 | 16:00 | 16:15 | Daily |
| 1211 | 17:00 | 17:15 | Daily |
| 1212 | 17:00 | 17:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |

**TINIAN TO SAIPAN**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2101 | 7:30 | 7:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 2102 | 8:30 | 8:45 | Daily |
| 2103 | 9:30 | 9:45 | Daily |
| 2104 | 10:30 | 10:45 | Daily |
| 2105 | 11:30 | 11:45 | Daily |
| 2106 | 12:30 | 12:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 2107 | 13:30 | 13:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 2108 | 14:30 | 14:45 | Daily |
| 2109 | 15:30 | 15:45 | Daily |
| 2110 | 16:30 | 16:45 | Daily |
| 2111 | 17:30 | 17:45 | Daily |
| 2112 | 18:30 | 18:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |

# WOMEN OF EXCELLENCE

Celebrating empowered women in the CNMI
who are making a difference in the community,
believe in positive changes, and serve as great influences
through their inspirational achievements

A SAIPAN TRIBUNE SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE

03 | 08 | 22

# 'I work for people so they could get what they deserve'

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

**Heather Santos Pangelinan** was recently appointed director of Population Health Services at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., but she already has eight years of work experience at the hospital in her bag, making her know the needs of the community more than any other person.

"I am a daughter of the CNMI, a product of the CNMI, just like my mother was and her mother before her. My three children are children of the CNMI and my life experiences and roles as a mother, daughter, wife, sister, and friend is what drives me on a daily basis to get up and do work to make things better," she said. "At the end of the day, the CNMI is our home, the home for my children and, while there are many challenges faced by the CNMI, I am resolved to never settle for less than what our people deserve. So, when I am told 'No, that can't work here' or 'No, that's not available for the CNMI,' I work to figure out and to make it happen and to give the people the services they deserve."

Pangelinan is directly involved in WIC [a supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children], family planning, immunization program and many more that are at the heart of every household in the CNMI.

As the director for Population Health Services, her major responsibility is directing the operations of population-based programs and services for the CHCC. These include programs that screen for cancer and provide vaccinations to prevent the introduction and spread of vaccine-preventable diseases within our CNMI, she said.

Her section runs programs that provide access to prenatal care and well-child care; home visiting programs for pregnant women and infants; programs that support community members to quit tobacco use; screening and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases and tuberculosis; nutrition and breastfeeding support programs; teen pregnancy prevention programs, and others.

A big part of her work is being in constant communication with agencies such the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Health Resources Services Administration on projects to promote and improve health and wellness for the CNMI community and families.

"Over the years I've worked to foster relationships and establish partnerships across our local systems that serve our community and CNMI families. I am continuously meeting with doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers as well as patients and community members as part of CHCC's efforts for ensuring that we are consistently assessing and addressing the health needs of our CNMI community," Pangelinan said. "I work closely with our CHCC managers and leaders on implementing strategies and making improvement to current programs to ensure that our organization is moving [in a] direction that meets our community needs. …While my work now requires that I spend more time behind the scenes, I make it a point every once in a while to take part in CHCC events that would allow me to interact with my community."

According to Pangelinan, her work is more at the hospital but, from time to time, we can catch her at an outreach event providing free blood pressure checks or glucose screening, knocking on doors to offer vaccination during village vaccination campaigns, or on the phone calling community members for appointment reminders. "It is important for me and motivating to be able to connect with the beneficiaries of our services. …Work in public health is challenging and never-ending and these past couple of years during the pandemic has definitely taught me a lot. However, I think some the greatest lessons I've learned and that have contributed to my professional career come from local women," she said.

For example, Pangelinan cites the former director for Public Health, Margarita Torres Aldan, and the CHCC chief executive officers Esther Muña, for being her mentors who have set examples "for me and many other local women on what it means to be a leader in the community. I learned and continue to learn so much from these women leaders. Probably the most influential woman who has helped to shape my career path is my mother, who by example has taught me courage, persistence, humility, compassion, and true grit in any situation and in all that I do. All these lessons I use to guide the work I do for our CNMI families."

Aside from her work at CHCC, Pangelinan serves at the Interagency Coordinating Council, a body that works directly with the Early Intervention Program. She also serves as a member on the CNMI Developmental Disabilities Council.

National organizations she belong include the Association for Maternal Child Health Programs and Association for Immunization Managers. "I use my membership in these organizations to learn about new and innovative, evidence-based practices that we can use here in the CNMI. But I think, more importantly, I use these groups as a national stage to bring attention and focus on the national level to the CNMI," she said.

"At annual AMCHP meetings, for example, I use the opportunity to meet with leaders from the Health Resources and Services Administration to discuss the challenges around health and healthcare for our CNMI women, children and families and engage them in helping us to identify and implement solutions to some of our unique challenges," she added.

Pangelinan said the team of professionals that she

*See WORK on Page 21*

15,779,520 minutes and counting...
Celebrating 30 years of leadership,
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to be better in everything they do.
May strong women continue to inspire us for many years to come.
Congratulations, Pauline Johnson!
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Better Together

# Wendi Herring: At your service

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

**Wendi Herring,** the first female chief executive of Atkins Kroll, Inc. where she is currently the president, as chosen a service-oriented career that doesn't only keep clients happy but where she also finds meaning, energy, and purpose.

"I have the great pleasure to work with the excellent teams at AK Guam and AK Saipan to ensure that we meet our financial targets, consistently work on improving our products and services for our valued customers," she said. "We ensure that we provide an inclusive, collaborative and enjoyable workplace that fosters development for our high-performing workforce and sincerely take pride in being a part of, and supporting, our island communities through donations to numerous nonprofit organizations and participation in outreach and community activities."

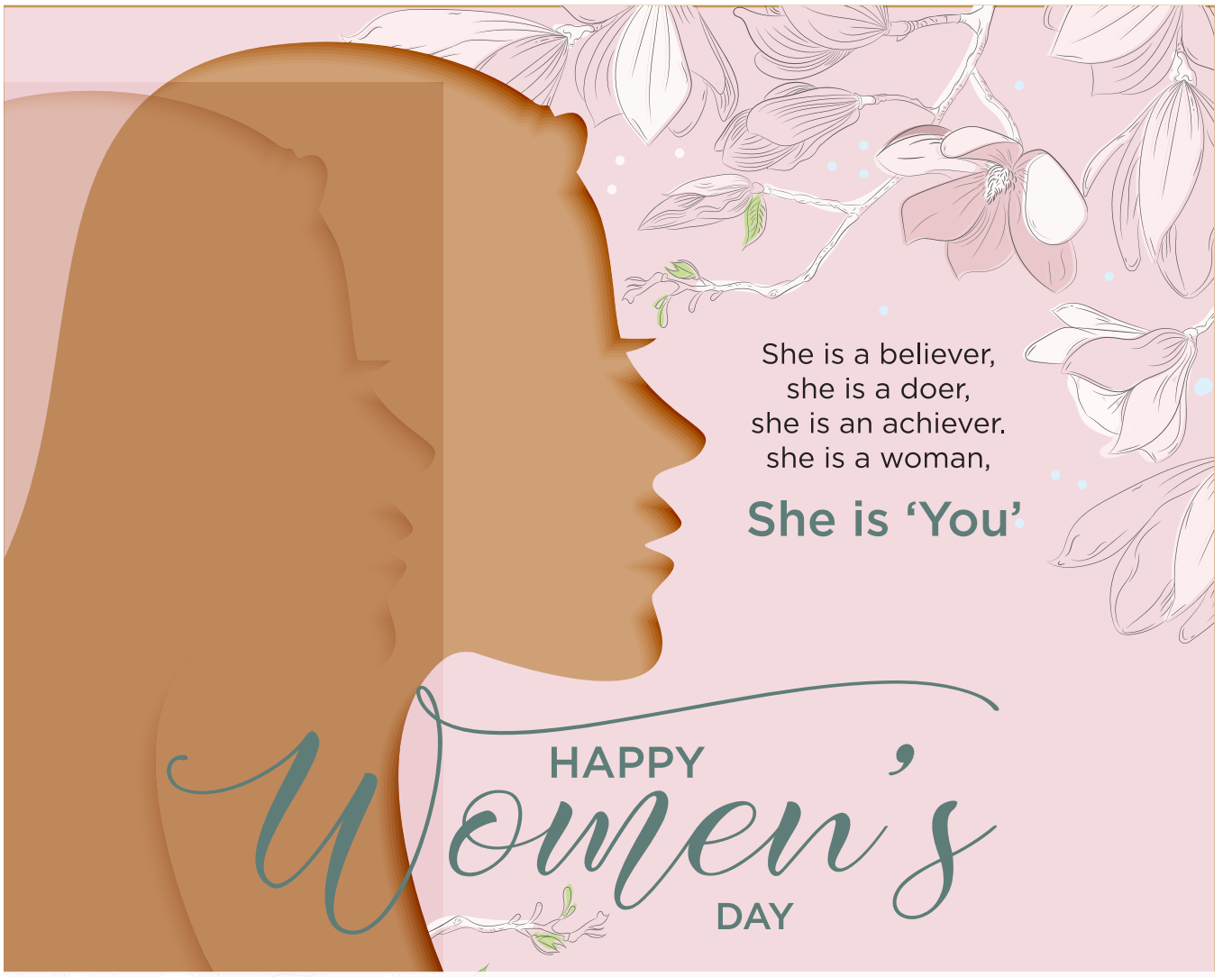
Herring's dedication and business ethics made her the 'woman boss' she is today. With her educational background and vast work experience in management and operations of hotels in the CNMI, Guam, and other parts of Asia, one would think that Herring would be intimidating and serious—characteristics that are totally the opposite of how she is—lighthearted and can be goofy at times.

She inspires and is open to be inspired, wears a smile that she readily gives to anyone, and reaches out a hand to anyone who needs it. "I have the honor of serving on the board of Make-A-Wish Guam and CNMI. Witnessing firsthand how wish-granting can so positively impact a child and their family is incredibly heartwarming and rewarding. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage everyone in the Marianas who has the means to support our chapter," she said.

"People I work with inspire me every single day with their hard work, enthusiasm and commitment to the business. …I hope that the people whom I have been privileged to work with know that I value their contributions and sincerely care. I hope it inspires them to be kind, courageous and committed to anything they put their mind to," she said

Herring grew up in California, finished college at University of California Berkely and established a life in the Marianas for many years. With that impeccable pedigree, Herring is able to do everything that is put on her plate. From ensuring customer satisfaction at work to appreciating 'me' time. "My goal is continue to increase our customer service standards, reach our monthly targets, increase efforts to develop our people, and continue our work with our islands' nonprofit organizations," she said.

In terms of keeping the balance in her life and managing stress, Herring stays active by walking and hitting the gym. "Exercise, friends, and happy hour," she said with a smile.

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Do not live someone else's life and someone else's idea of what womanhood is.
Womanhood is you. Womanhood is everything that's inside of you.
- Viola Davis
Celebrating International Women's Day by saluting our Women of Excellence at McDonald's of Saipan restaurants, main office and owner Ms. Marcia E. Ayuyu (center).
Happy Women's Day!

# How Women's History Month came to be

By COLLEEN SHALBY
LOS ANGELES TIMES

The year was 1972. In a high school classroom in Northern California, a student asked his teacher a timely question: What is the women's movement?

Shirley Chisholm had just made history as the first African-American to seek a presidential nomination from a major party. Title IX, the federal law that prohibits gender discrimination in education and sports had passed, and Gloria Steinem and Dorothy Pitman Hughes had launched Ms. Magazine. Still, little information about the history of half the population was readily available to students.

Molly MacGregor, then a 24-year-old, 11th-grade history teacher in Santa Rosa, Calif., came up near empty-handed in trying to answer her student's question. The only item on women's history she could find in her textbooks was a chapter about the Seneca Falls Convention, a women's rights gathering in 1848.

The revelation that she knew—and could readily find—so little about the history that paved the way for her life of freedom was eye-opening.

"What I hadn't absorbed was that, at the time, I was a married woman, teaching high school and wearing slacks to school," MacGregor said. "What was most significant to me was that I had never asked my mother, who was dead at the time, about her own life."

In a roundabout way, MacGregor's experience in 1972 led to the creation of Women's History Month, now celebrated across the U.S. each March.

A series of chance meetings between MacGregor and four other Sonoma County women sparked a shared mission to "write women back into history," first by establishing a curriculum on the subject for schoolchildren, then by founding a nonprofit organization and finally by persuading the president of the United States to recognize the role of women every year.

"My whole life has been about promoting women," she said.

The irony is that the work MacGregor and her four friends did rarely gets promoted. To the general public, their stories remain largely unknown.

In Santa Rosa, where MacGregor has lived for 45 years, many are unaware that she helped found Women's History Month. Celebrity status, however, was never her goal.

By 1974, MacGregor realized she needed to learn more about the contributions of women and enrolled as a graduate student at Sonoma State University.

There, she met two other students, Paula Hammett and Bette Morgan. Hammett was working on a presentation about women's history that was eventually shown in nursing homes, classrooms and union halls.

"We were trying to tell the stories that at that point very few people knew or remembered," she said.

In 1977, MacGregor, Hammett and Morgan started working with the Sonoma County Education Task Force. That's where the three of them met Mary Ruthsdotter and, together with input from others, they developed Women's History Week. The event was inspired by theme weeks, such as Ocean Week or Farm Week, that schools use to teach students about specific topics.

"We were starting from ground zero and we didn't know it," MacGregor said.

The women agreed their theme week should coincide with International Women's Day on March 8, established in 1911 with roots dating to 1908. They worked on an accompanying curriculum for Sonoma County schools, pulling facts from the University of California, Berkeley, which had a women's history program, local libraries and the works of scholars including Gerda Lerner, a formidable figure who helped establish the field of women's studies.

Their research also included an analysis of the lack of women in school textbooks. Eventually, the makers of those textbooks started asking for feedback.

"Harriet Tubman wasn't even in them," MacGregor said.

The women relied on an advisory board of female historians of color to ensure that their curriculum encompassed all of women's history—not just that of white women.

"It was never a question," said Hammett, who recently retired from Sonoma State.

With help from a federal grant though the Women's Educational Equity Act, which funds the development of teaching materials free of gender bias, they expanded their mission.

By 1978 and 1979, Sonoma County Women's History Week had grown from classrooms into a larger celebration, ending with a parade through downtown Santa Rosa. It was at a women's symposium at Sarah Lawrence College in New York that MacGregor promoted what she and others were doing in California, earning support from attendees to create a National Women's History Week.

Following the symposium, the group formed a nonprofit organization in 1980 called the National Women's History Project, now the National Women's History Alliance. That same year, MacGregor received a call from the White House.

"This is a call for Molly MacGregor."

The person speaking, MacGregor recalled, was Sarah Weddington, the attorney who, years earlier, represented Norma McCorvey, or "Jane Doe," in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case Roe v. Wade. In 1980, she was a special assistant to President Jimmy Carter.

Word about Women's History Week in Sonoma County had made its way from the symposium to the White House. Weddington was calling on the president's behalf to let MacGregor know he wanted to have a national Women's History Week in March.

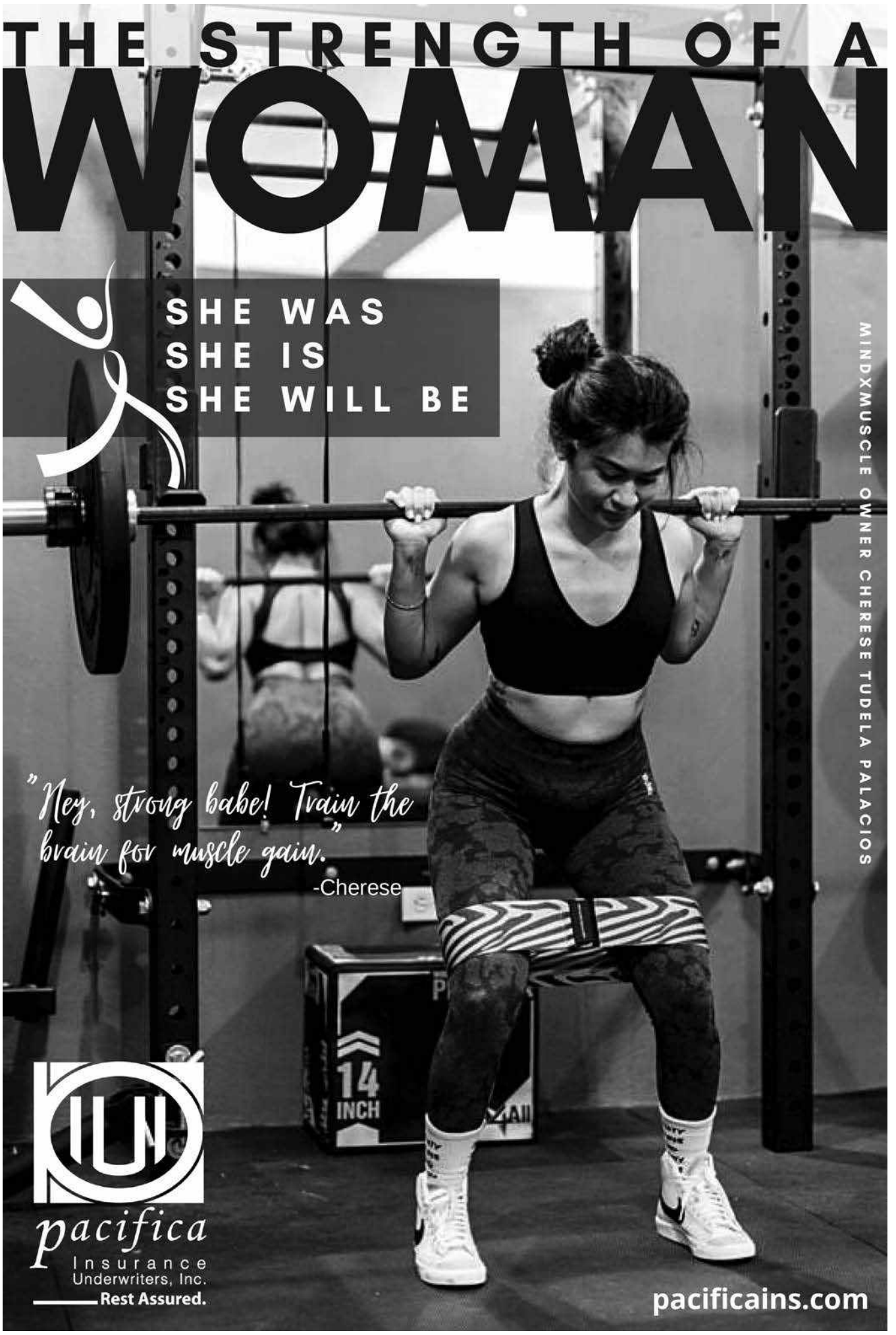
Carter signed a presidential proclamation, calling on Americans to recognize centuries of women's history. "I urge libraries, schools and community organizations to focus their observances on the leaders who struggled for equality—Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, Lucy Stone, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Harriet Tubman, and Alice Paul."

One year later, Sen. Orrin Hatch, then a Republican senator from Utah, and Barbara Mikulski, then a Democratic congresswoman from Maryland, made Carter's words a reality, introducing a resolution in Congress to officially designate Women's History Week in March.

By 1986, 14 states had gone a step further and declared March as Women's History Month. The momentum was used to lobby Congress to do the same nationally in 1987, leading thousands of schools across the country to use curriculum to better inform students about the advances of women, with support from governors, city councils and school boards.

Today, a presidential proclamation issued every year declares March as Women's History Month. It includes the names of five California women who made it happen—MacGregor, Hammett, Morgan, Ruthsdotter and musician Maria Cuevas, who the four met along the way.

Both MacGregor and Hammett acknowledge society's progress in the treatment and recognition of women. They spoke of the impact of the #MeToo movement and the Women's Marches. A renewed women's rights movement also has propelled a record number of women into politics.



# 'I am motivated by my desire to help others'

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

First Hawaiian Bank vice president and area manager Vickie N. Izuka came to Saipan for work but the minutiae of banking work was not match for her capacity to give of herself. She soon found herself moving not only in the four corners of her office but around the community for worthy causes.

Izuka, who was recently given the opportunity to oversee the FHB branches on Saipan, has been volunteering since high school and has always enjoyed helping others, learning new skills, and meeting people.

"My mother was my role model in volunteerism, and she was instrumental in having me participate in faith-based and sports activities when I was growing up. In high school and college, I volunteered in leadership capacities at school, church, and sports within my communities," she added.

After graduating from the University of Southern California with a degree in B.S. Business Administration and B.A. East Asian Language and Culture, Izuka started her finance and banking career right away. "I have been employed by domestic and foreign banks in wholesale and retail banking. My experience at these companies helped me build my foundational knowledge and banking skills. I am analytical by nature and with the insight and guidance I received from excellent mentors and colleagues, within the bank and also in the community, I am able to approach tasks and projects with confidence that leads to successful outcomes for our customers and the bank," she said.

Wherever she is, reaching out is always a part of her life. Izuka, who has been in the CNMI for 25 years now, serves as a member of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's education and workforce committee, the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association, and MP United Football Club.

"At the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, I have been involved with educational initiatives and the scholarship program to help our youth further their education with hopes of bettering our community. At NMIFA, I am one of the charter members and am very proud of the new opportunities the organization has developed for youth and adults. NMIFA has also built a beautiful facility in Koblerville for soccer activities and special community events. In addition to developing and sending several national teams to compete internationally, NMIFA offers recreational activities for community members of all ages so they can maintain a healthy lifestyle," she said.

Since becoming an empty nester for the past two years, Izuka said she has more time to focus on work and prioritize new activities. "I am motivated by my desire to help others. In the morning before heading to work, I start the day collaborating and communicating with my colleagues at work, community organizations, social circles, and my family who are in the U.S. mainland. I also participate in an early morning Pilates class a few times a week, which helps me prepare mentally and physically to start the day with positive energy," she said.

The banking industry took a hit during the pandemic, just like any other organizations in the world, which is why one of Izuka's goals this year is to continue to provide a safe and caring environment for her clients on Saipan.

"Many of our employees are considered front-liners serving many customers face-to-face daily and we have had to pivot and adjust at a moment's notice in many different directions with ongoing changes in bank and local government directives the past two years. I also want to continue to foster teamwork and collaboration with our Saipan staff and focus on improving banking experiences for our customers and deepening our community relationships," she said.

"This includes embracing change and thinking outside-the-box to make banking more convenient and beneficial while helping the bank grow. Customers now have many more financial options with active and ever-evolving digital technologies."

Izuka represents a growing sector of women who hold prominent positions in the finance and banking industry but she distinguishes herself by not turning her bacs when the community needs her help. "I hope that I have made a difference to those I have had the opportunity to work with so that people can see that anything can be done when you put your heart and mindset into it," she said. Ultimately, I aspire to be a positive influencer by working collaboratively, empowering the team, building trust and confidence, ensuring timely delivery of personal commitments and just helping others whenever I can."

FHB.COM

Celebrating International Women's Day!

Thank you to all the women in the CNMI for your hard work and for continuing to empower our people. Your contributions to the island is what keeps our island strong and resilient.

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# 'As stewards, we contribute to enhancing our CNMI'

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Fishing and agriculture are the biggest means of livelihood in the Marianas that date back to the time of the islands' forefathers. It provided food security, a healthy population, and good use of the fertile ocean and land that nourished marine animals, crops, and land animals.

Patricia Coleman knows this all too well and, as the first female interim dean and program leader of the Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services of the Northern Marianas College, she embodies commitment and expertise to move and expand the CNMI toward self-sufficiency by equipping the community with the right "know-how."

"At CREES, I work with a team of highly motivated and competent individuals to set and strategically work toward the vision for our department in the areas of research and extension in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Food Science, Family, Community, and Youth Development, and Nutrition and Health. We ensure implementation and evaluation of the programs and projects that help us reach our vision of a CNMI 'wherein people have the resources to grow, lead, and age with health and dignity,'" she said.

That vision includes food systems, built and natural environments, local economic opportunities, human capacity building, and building future leaders through youth development. CREES works with communities to bring about regeneration—"as stewards, we contribute to enhancing our CNMI by working with stakeholders to leave things better than we found them," she said.

Coleman has had her share of several recognitions and she uses these to foster engagement, continue the good work, and growth. She was a recipient of the World Health Organization's Health in All Policies Award for work with the "Tanapag, Achugao, San Roque, and As Matuis (TASA) Role Models" for significant improvements to the environments that children attend school, play, and live in.

Because of her leadership role in the original Children's Healthy Living Program grant, she received the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture Award for Integrated Research, Extension, and Education. Coleman was directly involved with providing capacity building that resulted in over 20 new diversified agroforestry plots on Saipan, Tinian and Rota after Supertyphoon Yutu. That got her recognized with the "Rising Star of Oceania" award from University of Hawaii's Pacific Business Center Program. This recognition honors individual service and/or organizational contribution to Oceania and the world. She was also instrumental in securing over $16 million worth of competitive grants for NMC.

"I am a workaholic by nature, but I know that I need to rest in order to do my best as a leader. About two months after I became interim dean of CREES, Typhoon Yutu hit. It destroyed our research and extension facilities. Everyone at NMC has had to work extraordinarily hard to overcome that. It has definitely been a challenge and has required working double overtime often to overcome those challenges and to set NMC back on a path wherein we can best serve our CNMI," Coleman said. "Then the pandemic hit and there wasn't a day in that first year after the pandemic that our NMC and CREES leaders were not working every single day and at least a couple of hours during 'non-work hours.' It was really rough at times but it is in those moments that we show our commitment and dedication to doing the hard work that needs to be done."

The work never stops. Coleman and her team hope to achieve many things in the first six month of this year.

"We set out to announce the architecture and engineering for the NMC-CREES Center for Research, Extension, and Development. We secured a $13.2-million grant from the Economic Development Administration to build a state-of-the-art disaster-resilient research and extension facility. After [super typhoons]Soudelor and Yutu ravaged CREES facilities, we have committed to not letting it happen again. We plan to hire and work with more professionals, scientists, and technical experts," she said. "We also aim to complete the Plant Biotechnology lab (tissue culture) and secure the Agriculture Experiment Station in As Perdido. We cannot function as a department without a fully functioning experiment station as our work and many of our grants (including CRED) are directly tied to the experiment station. [We also need to] secure funds to jumpstart the Food Science Program to increase our local capacity to do research on local plants, create more value-added products, and to ensure the safety of all food that is sold in the CNMI. There are several more and these are a few of them," she added.

To destress, Coleman spend time with family, exercise, read, and shut the screens/electronics off for periods of time. "I am also a board member of Paire Football Club and have been coaching youth for about 15 years or so. Soccer is

*See STEWARDS on Page 21*

"There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish." -- **Michelle Obama**

Happy International Women's Day!

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# 'The CNMI has demonstrated resilience during the pandemic'

By BEA CABRERA
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CORRESPONDENT

It is one thing to be a doctor and attend to patients because it is your job but it is a remarkable thing to attend to patients, manage a health crisis, and find joy in it. At least that's how Dr. Lily Muldoon sees it.

As Emergency Medicine physician at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. as well as its Medical Director of Public Health, Muldoon wears two hats at the hospital but she relishes the mixture of combining clinical medicine and public health. That way, "I have the satisfaction of the one-on-one relationships with my patients and their families while simultaneously developing policies that can impact every person in the CNMI," she said.

With a medical degree from the University of California San Francisco School of Medicine and a Public Health degree from Harvard School of Public Health, Muldoon is in a good place to start and work on the goals she is passionate about, bringing both practical skills and policy-making ideas to the table.

As ER doctor at the CHCC Emergency Department, Muldoon takes care of people suffering from heart attacks, strokes, broken bones, severe cuts, car accidents and COVID-19 infections, among others. "A highlight of this job is the team I get to work with. We have a strong group of nurses, physician assistants, and doctors who prioritize patient care, efficiency and camaraderie," she said.

Meanwhile, as medical director of Public Health, she provides guidance on health policy, supervision of CHCC's surveillance systems and linkage between population health and medical providers.

Muldoon first came to the islands as a rotating ER resident in 2019. She then moved back in March 2021 and did not dilly-dally and she wore her doctor coat right away. Even though the CNMI is a small speck on the globe that's far away from the U.S. mainland, she believes that the CNMI's response to the pandemic is extraordinary. "Despite limited health infrastructure, the CNMI has demonstrated resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike many nations around the world and even mainland U.S., the CNMI was not overwhelmed by COVID-19 and, phenomenally, we were never required to restrict or ration care," she said. "We are seeing COVID-19 transmission rates rapidly decline but we are not out of this current surge yet. However, I am cautiously optimistic that the CNMI will continue to follow simi-

See CNMI on Page 21

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# Bacani basks in a rewarding career

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Established in January 2018, the Commonwealth Health Care Corp.'s Pharmacy opened its doors to address the needs of the community and provide a better healthcare system. It was a dream come true for the hospital because it made medicine and medical supply accessible and affordable.

Pharmacy manager Rodylyn M. Bacani takes charge of the overall policies, protocols and goals of the pharmacy department of the hospital. "As a department, we collaborate with all departments in the hospital. That includes the medical, nursing, ancillary, and Public Health to determine needs, resolve problems, improve processes, and promote effective drug therapy," she said.

This year, Bacani is excited to finally implement more technological advancements in the pharmacy that will help it perform more efficiently and productively. These advancements include the DoseEgde IV Workflow system that is used for preparing IV medications and chemotherapy preparations in the inpatient pharmacy; the Sentri7 application, which is a program that will help pharmacists in performing antibiotic stewardship program, opioid stewardship, and medication management in the Inpatient Pharmacy; Clinical Pharmacy Solution, a program that will be used by pharmacists in the outpatient pharmacy to help patients improve their overall health as they receive counseling and recommendations from staff; and Meds-to-Beds, a mobile device that will be used by Pharmacy staff to dispense medications at the bedside of patients. This means discharging patients will have the option to receive their discharged meds in their hospital room.

Aside from Saipan, Bacani is also in charge of providing medicine for the people of Tinian and Rota. She said that being organized internally equips them to provide service efficiently. "The CHCC Pharmacy has three subunits:

· The Inpatient Pharmacy is where admitted patients in the hospital are supplied with the needed therapeutics, including that of the Emergency Room, Operating Room, Hemodialysis, Oncology and all the clinics;

· The Outpatient Pharmacy where patients getting discharged from the hospital or walk-ins can fill their medications to take home for self-administration. Adult vaccination is also offered there.

· The telepharmacy, which is CHCC's pharmacy on the islands of Rota and Tinian. These pharmacies can dispense medications directly to CHCC's patients in both islands and are equipped with the same pharmacy system that the CHCC Outpatient Pharmacy has. Pharmacists at CHCC Saipan remotely process the prescription and are also able to talk to staff and patients via teleconferencing.

As a leader, Bacani and her team always want to have an impact on people's lives and health. "If we perform well, our patients definitely benefit from it. I believe that reward comes in many forms and that whatever we do, including those that were done in secret, is seen by our Father in heaven—whether good or bad—and will be rewarded accordingly."

"Time management is the key to making sure I use my time efficiently and to balance my career and personal time. Another strategy is to do things by priority at a given moment to avoid panic and unnecessary restlessness," she added.

Outside hospital work, Bacani is an active member of the community. She currently sits as a board member of Cornerstone Christian Church and is one of the leaders and advocates of "Abigail's," a social arm of CHCC that helps victims of domestic violence. "Just recently, Abigail's also became a member of the Northern Marianas Coalition for Sexual and Domestic Violence. My involvement and experience in these organizations help me grow more mature as a person and as a leader," she said.

Bacani said her love for family that motivates her to work every day, as well as the people—"our patients, colleagues, bosses, and brethren that I serve. I believe that what I do touches somebody's life in a good way, and that is enough for me to do what I do at work, at church, in the community, and at home."

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# Cuison-Villazor: *Educator and social justice advocate*

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

For the CNMI to have regular visits from a law professor at the prestigious Rutgers Law School is a boon for the CNMI's legal profession but Saipan is doubly fortunate in that Rose Cuison-Villazor was actually born here and makes regular visits to the CNMI, during which she also generously shares her knowledge by participating in the NMI Judiciary's Summer Pre-Law program.

Having been exposed to different cultures and aware of how immigration issues affect families and the CNMI economy, Cuison-Villazor has made it her advocacy to educate and lift diversification and its benefits.

She is currently an interim dean and law professor at Rutgers Law School in Newark and a director of the Center for Immigration Law, Policy and Social Justice, which have given her opportunities to channel her causes and educate people about immigrant rights and racial justice.

"When I joined the Rutgers Law School faculty, I was appointed Professor of Law and Chancellor's Social Justice Scholar, which was a title given to me after I left [University of California] Davis School of Law where I was Martin Luther King Jr. scholar. When I joined Rutgers, I also received a grant to start the Center for Immigration Law, Policy, and Justice," she said.

"Immigrant rights and racial justice are two key issues that I have long researched and written about and have also advocated for in my role as a professor. As someone who comes from an immigrant family and grew up on Saipan, I believe that the rights of immigrants continue to be an issue in the CNMI. …Racial justice in my view also incorporates indigenous peoples' rights, which includes examining the rights of Chamorro and Carolinians. I have also written about the need to prioritize and protect the rights of indigenous peoples of the CNMI," she added.

Cuison-Villazor finished law school at the American University Washington Law School in 2000 and her Master of Law at the Columbia Law School in 2006. Her career in teaching got started there and she hasn't looked back since. Her regular participation in the NMI Judiciary's Summer Pre-Law Program is an extension of that. The program is a valuable opportunity for those interested in the law and those thinking about going to law school.

A big issue nowadays, especially in the U.S. mainland, is the politization of social justice and political race theory, which Cuison-Villazor would like to explore if it exists in the landscape of the CNMI.

"I do not believe that 'social justice' has been politicized but 'critical race the-

*See EDUCATOR on Page 21*

# How do you break gender bias in this day and age?

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

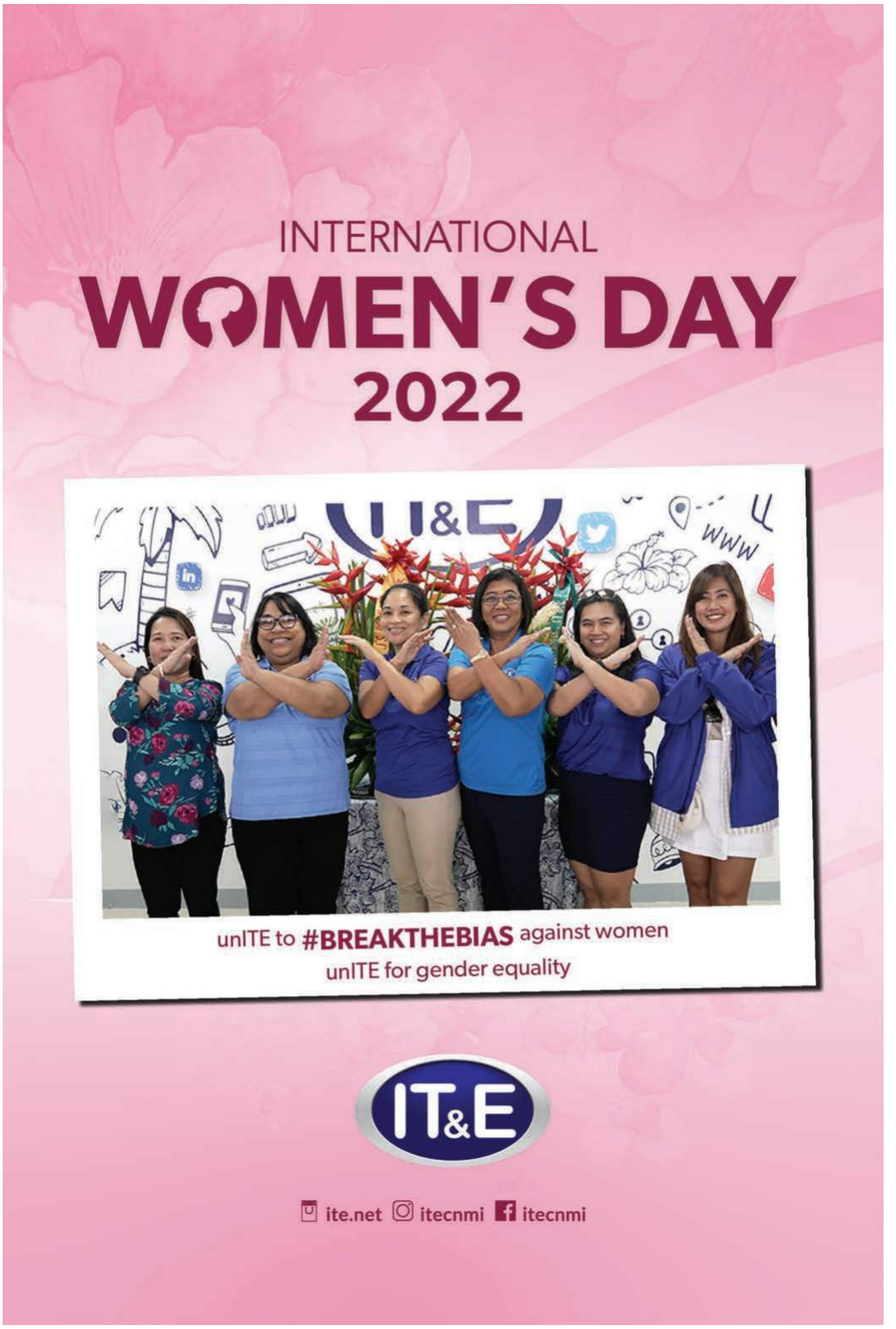
First off: What is gender bias? This may sound like mansplaining but we need to get our terms straightened out. Gender bias is the tendency to choose one gender over the other. It's when you think that certain professions are only for a specific gender, like thinking that only men can be engineers, or only women can be nurses. That's nonsense, of course, but gender bias is unfortunately alive and well, even in the 21st century.

■■■

Nening

**Cleo Nening,** who works at the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc., feels fortunate to be working in an office that advocates for a diverse and inclusive workplace but she acknowledges that many women still face gender bias in the workplace today. "It is unfortunate and disappointing. There should be no reason why a woman cannot work in a position that a man would stereotypically have

*See HOW on Page 18*



## HOW

*From Page 17*

been in," she said.

Nening said that NMPASI, an organization that protects the civil, legal, and human rights of people with disabilities, respect diversity in the workplace.

"We have a board of directors that is diversified, members are composed of women, men and people from different ethnicities, and different disabilities. Two, we are financially transparent as the entire staff is given a chance to review the budget and are aware of everyone's salaries. Three, NMPASI encourages cross-training so that if someone is out sick, the next person is able to pick where they left off for continuity, and lastly, NMPASI encourages professional development where each staff is encouraged to take classes from the Northern Marianas College," she added.

Nening said there should be more companies like NMPASI, an organization that not only exists to advocate for an inclusive community, but provides an inclusive environment for their employees.

"As individuals, we all come from different walks of life, with both men and women holding roles of being advocates, executive directors, legal counsels and more. We've always had level-headed leaders who look past these stereotypical factors like gender biases, race, and disabilities. This practice passes down generationally to each successor and has resulted in this conducive and productive workplace.

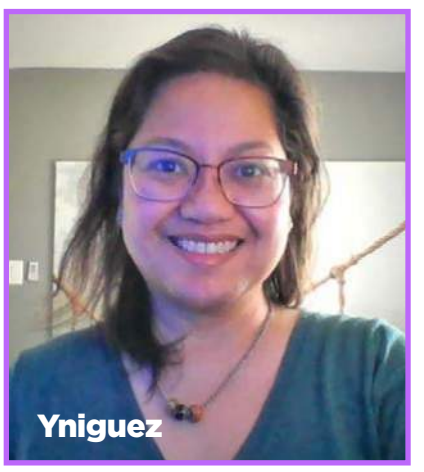
McDoulett

"Breaking down barriers of discrimination for individuals with disabilities is what our office aims to accomplish for clients who qualify for support. Fostering support for proper services to be offered and assisting our clients to advocate for themselves is what we do. No gender bias has ever gotten in the way of this core mission. In our small office of 10, six of us are females in various administrative, fiscal, and advocacy roles. With this notion at the forefront of our minds, we continue to advocate for an inclusive and diverse workplace for all," she added.

■■■

**Rhea McDoulett,** who co-owns the scuba dive shop Green Flash in Chinatown, admits that SCUBA sport and services are male dominated.

"There is a significant bias in the industry against women technicians. I have to drive myself to be more knowledgeable and competent than men in order to gain and keep their business. I have to continue my education all the time to be competitive in every aspect of the industry. Even then, I am constantly confronted with men thinking they know more than I do," she said.


Yniguez

■■■

**Leica Yniguez,** an IT data professional from Houston, Texas, said that women should have confidence, know, and assert their strengths. "I say 'just do it' and pay no regards to gender stereotypes and do what you enjoy and excel at. Even if you don't excel at it, find a champion or a mentor who can help you through the rougher spots."

■■■

For someone who has worked in the hotel industry, is a successful triathlete, and currently an employee of the Japan consular office in the CNMI, **Kimiko McKagan** has never experienced gender bias both in the workplace and sports. "I do not recall being in a situation where there was gender bias. I just know I do my very best in everything without feeling limited by anyone," she said.

McKagan

■■■

**Sonia Cabrera,** retired business woman said that she was in the work force starting in the 50's and mid-2000 and encountered many different types of gender bias. "Although I was in an environment that was male dominated—working for the government and eventually having a school for seafarers—nothing happened to me personally. But I always tell my daughters and granddaughters to be alert and stand their ground if they experience it," she said. "For women, it is best to get educated because knowledge is power and it is uniquely yours. Be confident because you are wonderfully made, whatever your background is and do not be reactive. Women sometimes walk in emotions and it's tough but you have to be tougher because you are in that situation because you are meant to be there. Do not let other people tell you otherwise."

Cabrera

HAPPY INTERNATIONAL

# Women's DAY

From the management and staff of

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Saipan Tribune

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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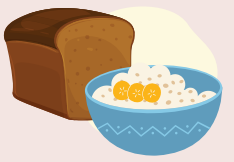
# HEALTH CHECK for women

## Daily tips for health:

Eat whole grains such as brown rice, oatmeal, and wheat bread



Get at least 30 minutes of daily physical activity

Eat more colorful foods such as vegetables and fruits

Drink lots of water

Limit your alcohol intake and nicotine use

Get at least 7 to 9 hours of sleep

Think positive! Having gratitude is one way of thinking positive

**It is important to see a healthcare provider every year.**
**Talk to them about important health issues and screenings!**

## Health screenings by age:

| | |
|---|---|
| All ages | Physical Check-Up<br>Oral exam<br>Vision exam<br>Diabetes screening<br>Blood pressure screening |
| Teens & 20s | STD screening<br>Pap Test |
| 30s<br>40s<br>50s | Cholesterol<br>Clinical Breast Exam<br>Mammogram |

## Things to talk to your healthcare provider about at any age:

Your plans to get pregnant or to help you find the right birth control

Your family history, especially risk for cancer, heart disease, and diabetes

How to quit nicotine use (vaping, smoking, chewing)

Taking a vitamin with folic acid!

Vaccines

Mental health concerns

Any violence in your life

**For more information about women health services call: (670) 287-7718**

This project was supported by Grant #B04MC40154 from the Health Resources and Services Administration and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC). The contents above are solely the responsibility of CHCC and do not necessarily represent the official view of HRSA or HHS.

## WORK

*From Page 10*

works with motivates and inspire her. "It truly is a rewarding experience to be able to work with a group of motivated and compassionate individuals who are always willing to take risks with me and try new and innovative ideas. …My goals for the first six months of this year include completing an updated CHCC Population Health Strategic Plan to guide the work we do for the next three years, initiate steps toward public health accreditation for our organization and, in partnership with our clinical providers, implement mobile clinic services in villages throughout the CNMI," she said.

"It is my hope that people I work with focus on what 'can be' and not be deterred by 'what is' or challenges that we may encounter. There is always room for growth and improvement and I hope that those I work with are motivated to continue working toward improvement and not be complacent. It is my hope that those I work with continue to do this work with compassion and kindness."

## EDUCATOR

*From Page 17*

ory' has been. That is due to misconceptions about what 'critical race theory' is about. I would need to wait until I get to Saipan this summer to explore whether these issues are also likely to be politicized in the CNMI," she said.

Cuison-Villazor will be entering her second year of her deanship and she wants to expand initiatives that they have been working on at Rutgers last year, including ensuring that legal education is accessible, diverse, and continues to provide services to the underserved.

On getting her message across and making people listen to what social movements are about before rushing to judgment, Cuison-Villazor cites a personal advice that lives by: "When I join others in solidarity with movements—such as the Black Lives Matter movement, or advocate for immigrants' rights, rights of LGBTQ+ individuals, or reproductive rights—I do my best to highlight how the issues have broader implications for all and the importance of engaging in listening and empathy," she said.

Cuison-Villazor, who is an alumna of Mount Carmel School, concedes that juggling research, teaching and service is not easy but she always tries to seek a balance. "That's a work in progress," she said.

## STEWARDS

*From Page 14*

another way to help promote physical activity, good nutrition, sportsmanship, and to build friendships with people who we might not typically interact with," she said.

Whether at work or at play, the underlying energy that keeps Coleman going is a family motto that she lives by—"service above self." In retrospect, this has helped shape her values. "I'm really grateful for all of those who have given their time to mentor and guide me: Dr. Rachel Novotny (University of Hawaii), Jerry Tan, Frankie Eliptico, Dr. Craig Elevitch and many others who continuously encourage me to reach higher and who have inspired me through their journeys of overcoming adversity and leadership. Agnes McPhetres, Tayna Belyeu-Camacho, and so many others. …My family has always believed in me and has been so supportive in the best and worst of times—my mom, dad, sister, brother, cousins, aunts, and uncles and, of course, my husband, Leo Pangelinan, and our children."

## CNMI

*From Page 15*

lar trends as the U.S. mainland and we will continue to see a steady decline and an easing up of restrictions, like indoor masking."

Part of Muldoon's leadership skills is evaluating opportunities that come with the changes in the medical field that benefit the community. "My focus at the beginning of 2022 is to support the CNMI in the transition as we enter a new phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. Focusing on evidence-based guidance and community education are critical components. Next, I am working with interdisciplinary teams to understand trends in primary care access and how we can better utilize a comprehensive islandwide community health worker system," she said. "To this end, I am bringing experts across specialties together to develop and implement a community health worker model addressing issues of health literacy, access, and primary care."

Before the CNMI, Muldoon immersed herself in various healthcare systems around the world and, according to her, she aims to be a change-maker among the most vulnerable populations on the planet. "Through my international

*See CNMI on Page 22*

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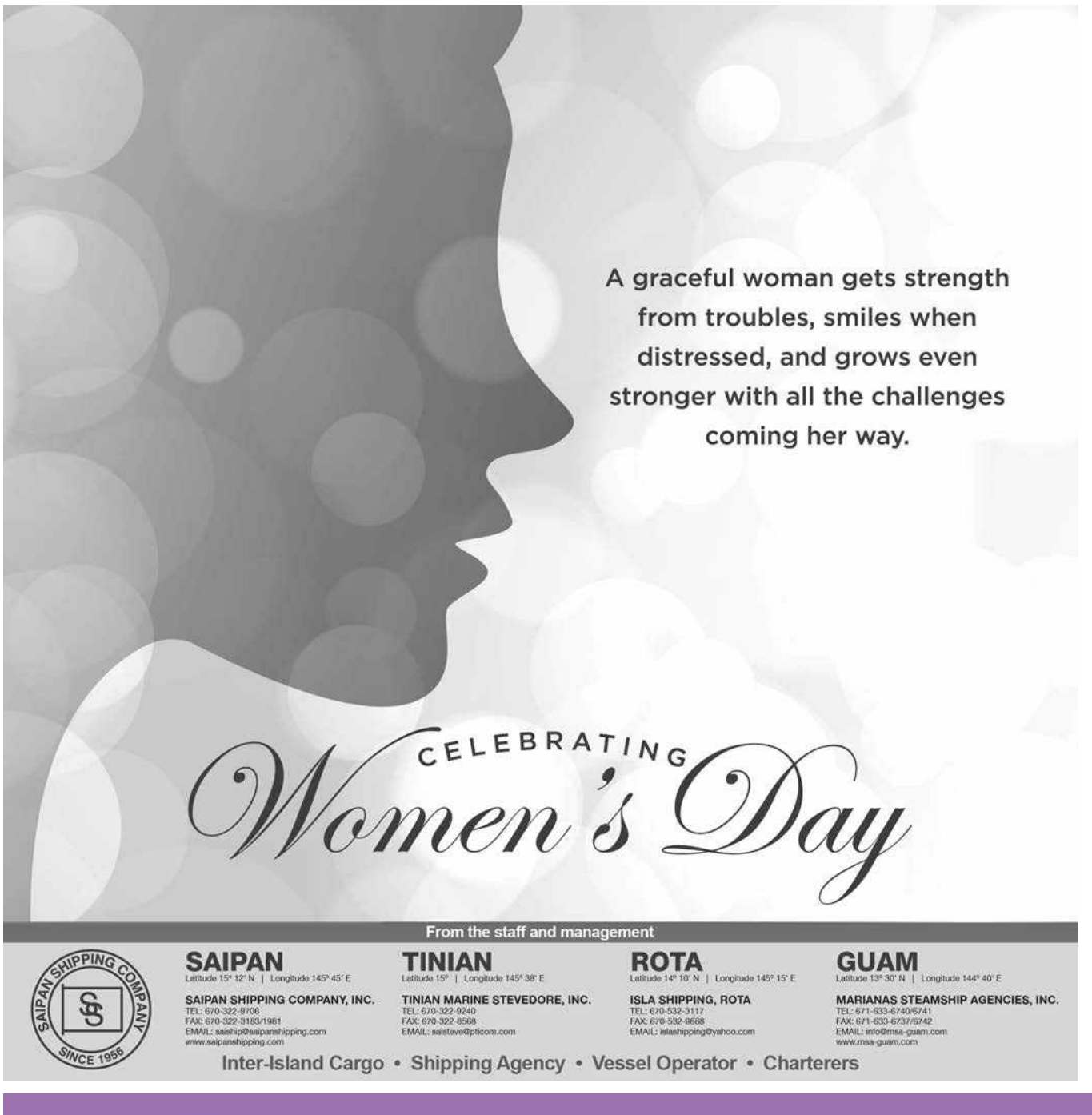


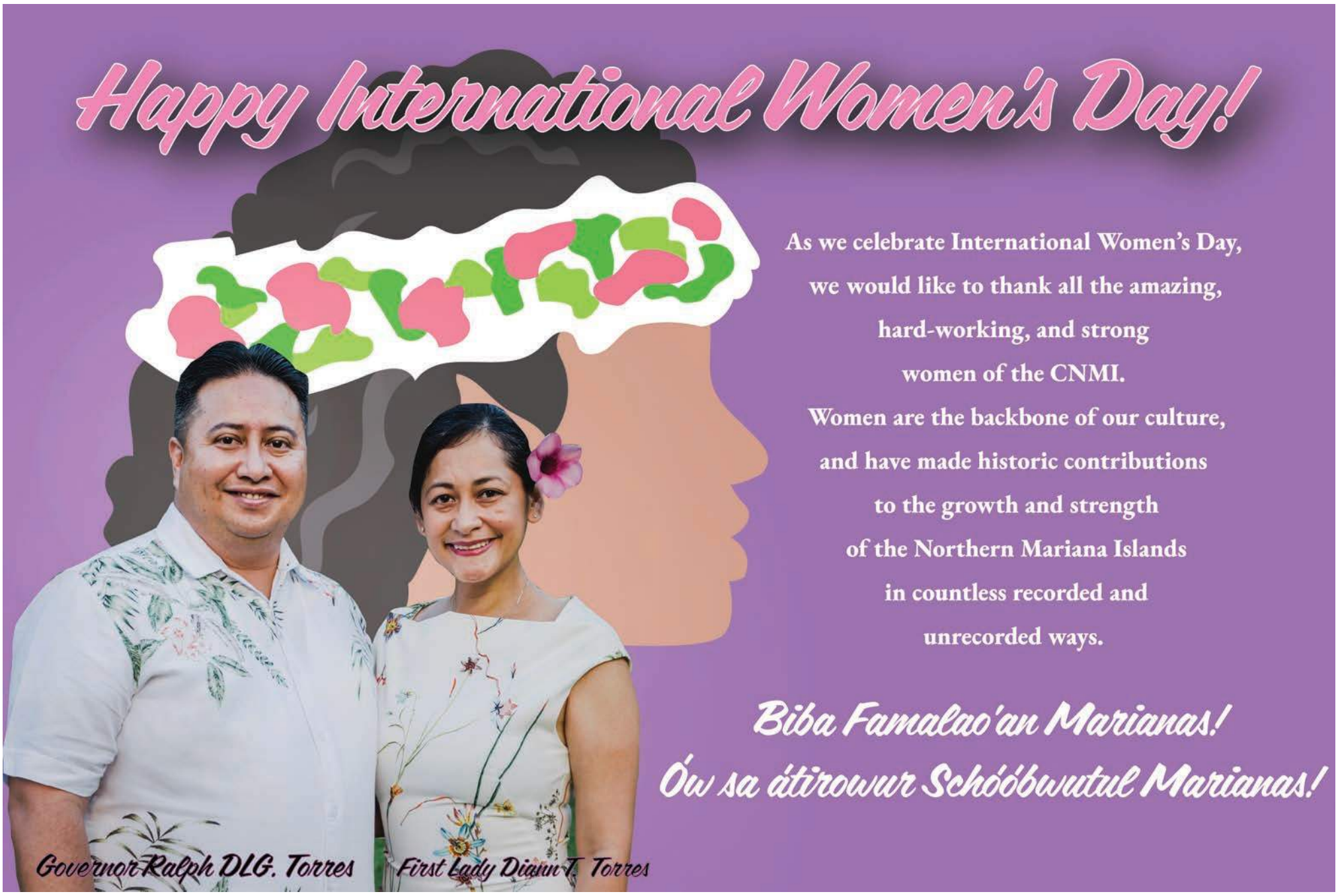

## CNMI

*From Page 21*

experiences in East Africa, public health training, and specialization in Emergency Medicine, I have been inspired by resilient individuals and communities facing challenging health circumstances. Professionally, I envision myself as a specially trained global healthcare leader filling the critical health leadership gap that exists in many Pacific Island jurisdictions and as a physician and as medical director of Public Health, I am developing evidence-based initiatives that link research, health services and policy," she said.

It's not all work, though. Besides penciling into her schedule her ER shifts, meetings, and research, Muldoon also values scheduling time for exercise, enjoyment, and building of friendships. "My participation in the Northern Mariana Athletics, Run Saipan, and Northern Mariana Islands Football Association are what keep me grounded and connected to the community. …I am a proud member of the Rotary Club of Saipan. …I have been involved with Rotary International since 2007 and I know it will forever be an important part of my life. We share a similar moto of 'service above self' and also the enjoyment of friendship through volunteering," she added.

A big part of Muldoon's medical career is the connection she has with her patients. "After I take care of someone in the ER, it is my priority that they walk away feeling as though they have received high-quality care with compassion and that they understand their disease process and next steps. Providing health education is an important part of my practice. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the individual to make their own health decisions and I want them to feel empowered in their health goals and personal care," she said. "My goal is to inspire others to live healthy positive lives. Keep moving—whether it is walking, swimming, or playing sports. We will have stronger bodies and minds to promote resiliency during times of adversity. My other goals include being a loyal and caring friend, serving as a mentor to young women interested in medicine and being a contributor to research and literature so novel ideas can be shared and replicated."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As we celebrate International Women's Day,
we would like to thank all the amazing,
hard-working, and strong
women of the CNMI.
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and have made historic contributions
to the growth and strength
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in countless recorded and
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*February 2022 Kagman High School History Class Museum Tour*

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# Business

## New offices for the hybrid era? Many companies are on board

By JOSH FUNK
AP BUSINESS WRITER

**OMAHA, Neb.** (AP)—If you build a shiny new office building, will your employees show up to work in it?

Many U.S. companies are banking on it because they believe working in person is better for collaboration and training young employees. So even though most employees are still working from home offices and dining room tables today, some companies are willing to spend big on showplace headquarters.

Businesses recognize there is a place for offices despite the fact that they plan to give workers more flexibility to work from home and might see cost savings from limiting their real estate holdings.

In a sign of how committed companies are to keeping offices, some 57% of the more than 2,300 office projects that giant architecture firm Gensler is now working on were started last year, in the middle of the pandemic. But as they're building, companies are tweaking designs to reflect that offices may become spots that workers visit primarily to collaborate with others, instead of places where they toil all day, every day.

Jordan Goldstein, the co-firm managing principal at Gensler, said companies are placing a premium on having more meeting rooms with the technology to accommodate remote and in-person participants, as well as more flexible space for people to choose where they work within the office.

Mutual of Omaha plans to build a glassy new headquarters in its namesake Nebraska city that could wind up as Omaha's tallest building.

But the insurance company says the plans for its new building reflect its commitment to flexible work. The company has 4,000 employees in the Omaha metro area but is planning a building that can only accommodate between 2,200 and 2,500 people on any given day, Mutual spokesman Jim Nolan said.

"The only way that works is by embracing remote and hybrid work," he said.

The number of people working remotely is clearly growing because so many companies learned they could do it during the pandemic. The Society for Human Resource Management estimates the number of totally remote U.S. workers will double to roughly 36 million people by 2025. But the CEO of that trade group, Johnny C. Taylor Jr., said that will still only account for a little over 20% of the workforce. The other nearly 80% will work in an office at least part of the time.

Another survey done last year by CBRE Group, the world's largest commercial real estate services and investment firm, showed that 87% of large companies planned to use a hybrid schedule after the pandemic, with workers in the office part of the time.

And separate worker surveys that SHRM and Gensler conducted last fall both showed that more than half of workers wanted to be back in the office at least one day a week.

But so far businesses have been slow to bring employees back. An average of 36.8% of the workforce was back in offices during the fourth week of February in 10 major U.S. cities monitored by Kastle Systems, which tracks building access-card swipes. That number has been creeping up since early January when it fell as low as 23% during the omicron surge.

Mutual of Omaha CEO James Blackledge said bringing people together in an office at least periodically will boost productivity and creativity, and having a gleaming new $433 million office should help the company attract new talent. Plus, the new headquarters will likely be smaller overall than Mutual's current headquarters complex, but the exact size will be determined later in the design process.

Elsewhere, two high profile projects already underway are Walmart's new headquarters being built in Bentonville, Arkansas, and the new New York City home for bank JP Morgan Chase.

Walmart said it was overdue for a new headquarters regardless of the pandemic because it is currently spending tens of millions of dollars every year to maintain an outdated patchwork of more than 20 offices in northwest Arkansas for its administrative and support staff.

JP Morgan CEO Jamie Dimon has said that the rise of work-from-home might mean the company only needs 60 desks for every 100 employees because they will be shared. But he remains committed to a new headquarters for 12,000 to 14,000 of the bank's employees because many tasks will still need to be done in person.

Deluxe, the company once known primarily for printing checks that now processes nearly $3 trillion in payments a year, invested $12.2 million during the pandemic in a new 94,000-square-foot Minneapolis headquarters that opened last fall. When they return on a more regular basis later this month, employees will be expected to be there more often than they work from home.

But the new headquarters is less than one-third the size of Deluxe's old one. The company cut its overall real estate footprint in half nationwide to better reflect its current needs with more people working remotely.

Deluxe CEO Barry McCarthy acknowledges that parts of each of his employee's jobs can be done remotely, but coming together and being able to work as a team is a bigger element.

"There are very, very few jobs that are just individual contributor jobs with little or no interaction required from others," he said.

McCarthy, like many CEOs, says he believes office work is better for training and mentoring younger employees because they can watch and interact with their coworkers better and get more immediate feedback on their work.

The roughly 100 headquarter workers at shoe and apparel company Merrell moved into a new office in Rockford, Michigan, in January. The project was in the works before the pandemic began, but CEO Chris Hufnagel said the company reworked the plan after it became clear that many employees would still work from home, at least part of the time. Hufnagel said he believes the office will be the "epicenter" for the company's work.

"I think everyone realizes that there are parts of our jobs that we do better when we are together," Hufnagel said.

And then there are companies that plan to largely do away with their offices in favor of remote work. But even those firms may keep a small office presence.

Intradiem CEO Matt McConnell said the software company had its most profitable year ever in 2021 and didn't miss a beat while its 150 employees and 75 contractors were all working remotely. After checking with employees, the company shifted to a remote-first plan and will let its current headquarters lease expire at the end of 2022.

# Nation

## Seven dead after tornadoes tore through central Iowa

**WINTERSET, Iowa** (AP)—Seven people were killed, including two children, when several tornadoes swept through central Iowa, destroying homes and knocking down trees and power lines in the state's deadliest storm in more than a decade, authorities said.

Emergency management officials in Madison County said four were injured and six people were killed Saturday when one tornado touched down in the area southwest of Des Moines near the town of Winterset around 4:30 p.m. Among those killed were two children under the age of five and four adults.

In Lucas County, about 54 miles (87 kilometers) southeast of Des Moines, officials confirmed one death and multiple reported injuries when a separate tornado struck less than an hour later.

The state Department of Natural Resources said that person who died was in an RV at a campground at Red Haw State Park in Chariton, Iowa.

Thunderstorms that spawned tornadoes moved through much of Iowa from the afternoon until Saturday night with storms also causing damage in the Des Moines suburb of Norwalk, areas just east of Des Moines and other areas of eastern Iowa. The storms were fueled by warm, moist air from the Gulf of Mexico.

Officials reported a number of homes were damaged or destroyed, roads were blocked by downed lines and tree branches were shredded by the strong winds. At one point, power outages affected more than 10,000 in the Des Moines area. About 800 customers remained without power Sunday evening.

The storms are the deadliest to occur in Iowa since May 2008 when one tornado destroyed nearly 300 homes and killed nine people in the northern Iowa city of Parkersburg. Another tornado a month later killed four boys at the Little Sioux Boy Scout ranch in western Iowa.

Northern Illinois University meteorology professor Victor Gensini said there have been plenty of examples of deadly storms in March even though they are more common in April and May. Saturday's storms were not nearly as unusual as the mid-December tornado outbreak that Iowa saw last year, he said.

## Convoy protesting COVID-19 mandates does beltway circuit

AP

A crowd of supporters fill the New Design Road bridge over I-270 in Frederick County as the "People's Convoy" passed through the county as they made their way from Hagerstown to Washington, Sunday, March 6, 2022.

**HAGERSTOWN, Md.** (AP)—A large group of truck drivers who object to COVID-19 mandates drove two loops around the beltway surrounding Washington, Sunday, deliberately moving slowly to impact traffic and make their feelings known to lawmakers in the nation's capitol.

People crowded onto overpasses, waving at the "People's Convoy" and holding signs and American flags. Within the convoy, there were tractor-trailers with horns blaring and some recreational vehicles and pickup trucks occasionally going by, mixed with the normal traffic on Interstate 495 in Silver Springs, Maryland.

The convoy was moving normally—albeit slowly—and while some congestion was noted, news outlets reported traffic was able to flow around the convoy. Many vehicles had American flags, while some flew Don't Tread on Me banners.

"We're not even sure we can call it a convoy any more because it's so dispersed among routine traffic at this point," Virginia State Police spokeswoman Corinne Geller told The Washington Post.

Protesters staged at the Hagerstown Speedway in Maryland during the weekend before heading down a single lane of Interstate 81. Their plan was to drive onto the Capital Beltway, circle it twice and then return to Hagerstown.

The convoy follows similar demonstrations by truckers in Canada who are upset at vaccine requirements to cross the Canadian border. The Washington Post also reported that convoy organizer Brian Brase intends for protesters to travel on the beltway every day during the upcoming week until their demands are met.

A video posted on Twitter showed trucks passing under a large American flag hoisted in the air by two cranes. Supporters stood along a road waving as the drivers left the speedway.

Officials with state police in Maryland and Virginia have said they will monitor the activities.

# Asia

## Death toll nears 6 million as pandemic enters its 3rd year

AP

Workers in protective gear bury a coronavirus victim during a funeral at a cemetery in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Thursday, Feb. 17, 2022.

**BANGKOK** (AP)—The official global death toll from COVID-19 is on the verge of eclipsing 6 million—underscoring that the pandemic, now entering its third year, is far from over.

The milestone is the latest tragic reminder of the unrelenting nature of the pandemic even as people are shedding masks, travel is resuming and businesses are reopening around the globe. The death toll, compiled by Johns Hopkins University, stood at 5,997,994 as of Sunday afternoon.

Remote Pacific islands, whose isolation had protected them for more than two years, are just now grappling with their first outbreaks and deaths, fueled by the highly contagious omicron variant.

Hong Kong, which is seeing deaths soar, is testing its entire population of 7.5 million three times this month as it clings to mainland China's "zero-COVID" strategy.

As death rates remain high in Poland, Hungary, Romania and other Eastern European countries, the region has seen more than 1 million refugees arrive from war-torn Ukraine, a country with poor vaccination coverage and high rates of cases and deaths.

And despite its wealth and vaccine availability, the United States is nearing 1 million reported deaths on its own.

Death rates worldwide are still highest among people unvaccinated against the virus, said Tikki Pang, a visiting professor at the National University of Singapore's medical school and co-Chair of the Asia Pacific Immunization Coalition.

"This is a disease of the unvaccinated—look what is happening in Hong Kong right now, the health system is being overwhelmed," said Pang, the former director of research policy and cooperation with the World Health Organization. "The large majority of the deaths and the severe cases are in the unvaccinated, vulnerable segment of the population."

It took the world seven months to record its first million deaths from the virus after the pandemic began in early 2020. Four months later another million people had died, and 1 million have died every three months since, until the death toll hit 5 million at the end of October. Now it has reached 6 million—more than the populations of Berlin and Brussels combined, or the entire state of Maryland.

But despite the enormity of the figure, the world undoubtedly hit its 6 millionth death some time ago. Poor record-keeping and testing in many parts of the world has led to an undercount in coronavirus deaths, in addition to excess deaths related to the pandemic but not from actual COVID-19 infections, like people who died from preventable causes but could not receive treatment because hospitals were full.

Edouard Mathieu, head of data for the Our World in Data portal, said that—when countries' excess mortality figures are studied—as many as nearly four times the reported death toll have likely died because of the pandemic.

An analysis of excess deaths by a team at The Economist estimates that the number of COVID-19 deaths is between 14 million and 23.5 million.

## ASIAN BRIEFS

### 1 dead, over 20 hurt in grenade attack in Kashmir market

**SRINAGAR, India** (AP)—One person was killed and more than 20 others injured on Sunday when an assailant lobbed a grenade at a busy market in the main city in Indian-controlled Kashmir, police said. According to local media reports, the target of the attack in Srinagar appeared to have been security personnel in the area. There was a huge crowd in the market when the grenade exploded. The injured were taken a hospital. Police officer Sujit Kumar said that security forces were investigating and that the attacker would be found soon.

### More than 100 Rohingya land on beach in Indonesia's Aceh

**BANDA ACEH, Indonesia** (AP)—More than 100 hungry and weak Rohingya Muslims were found on a beach in Indonesia's northernmost province of Aceh on Sunday after weeks at sea, officials said. The group arrived on Jangka beach near Alue Buya Pasi, a fishing village in Bireuen district, early Sunday. The villagers who saw the 114 ethnic Rohingya on a rickety wooden boat helped them to land and then reported their arrival to authorities, said Badruddin Yunus, the leader of the local tribal fishing community. "They look very weak from hunger and dehydration after a long and severe voyage at sea," said Yunus, adding it wasn't clear where the group was traveling from or where it was headed because none of them could speak English or Malay. The 58 men, 21 women and 35 children were given shelter and received help from villagers, police and military, while local authorities including the coronavirus task force were helping to process them, Yunus said.

# World

## Russia sets ceasefire so people can evacuate in heavy shelling

**LVIV, Ukraine** (AP)—Even as Russia announced a ceasefire starting Monday morning and the opening of humanitarian corridors in several areas, its armed forces continued to pummel Ukrainian cities, with multiple rocket launchers hitting residential buildings.

The limited ceasefire announcement came a day after hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian civilians attempting to flee to safety were forced to shelter from Russian shelling of cities in Ukraine's center, north and south. Officials from both sides planned a third round of talks Monday.

Russian forces continued their offensive, opening fire on the city of Mykolaiv, 480 kilometers south of the capital of Kyiv, Ukraine's General Staff said Monday morning. Rescuers said they were putting out fires in residential areas caused by rocket attacks.

Shelling also continued in the suburbs of Kyiv, including Irpin, which has been cut off from electricity, water and heating for three days.

"Russia continues to carry out rocket, bomb and artillery strikes on the cities and settlements of Ukraine," the General Staff said. "The invaders continue to use the airfield network of Belarus to carry out air strikes on Ukraine."

The Russians have also been targeting humanitarian corridors, taking women and children hostage and placing weapons in residential areas of cities, according to the General Staff.

A Russian task force said a ceasefire would start Monday morning, the 12th day of the war, for civilians from Kyiv, the southern port city of Mariupol, Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, and Sumy. It wasn't immediately clear if fighting would stop beyond the areas mentioned in the task force's statement, or when the ceasefire would end.

The announcement follows two failed attempts to evacuate civilians from Mariupol, from which the International Committee of the Red Cross estimated 200,000 people were trying to flee. Russia and Ukraine have traded blame for the failure. The Russian task force said Monday's ceasefire and the opening of the corridors was announced at the request of French President Emmanuel Macron, who spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday.

Evacuation routes published by Russia's RIA Novosti news agency, citing the Defense Ministry, show that civilians will be able to leave to Russia and Belarus. Russian forces will be observing the ceasefire with drones, the task force said.

The earlier breakdown of evacuations came as Ukraine officials said that Russian shelling intensified across the country.

"Instead of humanitarian corridors, they can only make bloody ones," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Sunday. "Today a family was killed in Irpin. Man, woman and two children. Right on the road. As in a shooting gallery."

Putin said Moscow's attacks could be halted "only if Kyiv ceases hostilities." As he has often done, Putin blamed Ukraine for the war, telling Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday that Kyiv needed to stop all hostilities and fulfill "the well-known demands of Russia."

Putin launched his invasion with a string of false accusations against Kyiv, including that it is led by neo-Nazis intent on undermining Russia with the development of nuclear weapons.

As Russian attacks worsened, a brief reprieve from fighting in Mariupol collapsed. Heavy artillery hit residential areas in other large cities, local officials reported.

"There can be no 'green corridors' because only the sick brain of the Russians decides when to start shooting and at whom," Ukraine Interior Ministry adviser Anton Gerashchenko said on Telegram.

On what is known as Forgiveness Sunday in Orthodox Christianity, Zelenskyy said Ukraine will never forgive the shelling of its homes, the killing of unarmed people and the destruction of its infrastructure.

"And God will not forgive, either today or tomorrow—never. And instead of a day of forgiveness, there will be a judgment day. Of this I am sure," he said in a video address.

The death toll remains unclear. The U.N. says it has confirmed just a few hundred civilian deaths but also warned that the number is a vast undercount.

Presidential adviser Oleksiy Arestovich described a "catastrophic" situation in the Kyiv suburbs of Bucha, Hostomel and Irpin, where efforts to evacuate residents on Sunday failed. About eight civilians, including a family, were killed by Russian shelling in Irpin, according to Mayor Oleksander Markyshin.

AP

People cross an improvised path under a destroyed bridge while fleeing the town of Irpin, Ukraine, Sunday, March 6, 2022.

# Life & Style

## Netflix, TikTok block services in Russia to avoid crackdown

By MATT O'BRIEN
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

Netflix and TikTok suspended most of their services in Russia on Sunday as the government cracks down on what people and media outlets can say about Russia's war in Ukraine.

Pulling the plug on online entertainment—and information—is likely to further isolate the country and its people after a growing number of multinational businesses have cut off Russia from vital financial services, technology and a variety of consumer products in response to Western economic sanctions and global outrage over the invasion of Ukraine.

U.S. credit card companies Visa, Mastercard and American Express all said over the weekend they would cut service in Russia. South Korea's Samsung Electronics, a leading supplier of both smartphones and computer chips, said it would halt product shipments to the country, joining other big tech companies such as Apple, Microsoft, Intel and Dell.

And two of the so-called Big Four accounting firms said Sunday they were cutting ties to the country. KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoopers both they would end their relationships with their Russia-based member firms, each of which employs thousands of people.

Ukraine's minister of digital transformation, Mykhailo Fedorov, called on U.S. technology companies to do more Sunday to hit back against Russia. He tweeted open letters asking Apple and Google to shut down their app stores in Russia and for Amazon and Microsoft to suspend their cloud computing services.

Providers of internet-based services and apps have been mostly reluctant to take actions that could deprive Russian citizens of social media services and other sources of information.

That changed Friday when Russian President Vladimir Putin intensified a crackdown on media outlets and individuals who fail to hew to the Kremlin line on the war, blocking Facebook and Twitter and signing into law a bill that criminalizes the intentional spreading of what Moscow deems to be "fake" reports.

Netflix didn't specify a reason for suspending services Sunday except to say it reflected "circumstances on the ground." The company had previously said it would refuse to air Russian state TV channels.

TikTok said Russian users of its popular social media app would no longer be able to post new videos or livestreams and they also wouldn't be able to see videos shared from elsewhere in the world.

"In light of Russia's new 'fake news' law, we have no choice but to suspend livestreaming and new content to our video service while we review the safety implications of this law," TikTok said in a statement on Twitter. "Our in-app messaging service will not be affected."

TikTok spokesperson Hilary McQuaide said the TikTok app in Russia now appears in "view-only" mode and won't let people post or see new videos or livestreams. They can still see older videos, but not if they came from outside the country, she said.

"The safety of employees is our top priority," she said, adding that the video-sharing service—part of China-based tech company ByteDance—didn't want to put either its Russian employees or users at risk of severe criminal penalties. Some protesters who've taken to the streets in Moscow, St. Petersburg and other Russian cities to decry the invasion of Ukraine have used social media platforms to broadcast their cause.

The new "fake news" legislation, quickly rubber-stamped by both houses of the Kremlin-controlled parliament and signed by Putin, imposes prison sentences of up to 15 years for those spreading information that goes against the Russian government's narrative on the war.

## 'The Batman' gives movie theaters a new hope with big launch

This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Robert Pattinson in a scene from "The Batman." AP

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—Batman has his fair share of pressures, from saving Gotham to saving movie theaters. And while they're both still decidedly works in progress, "The Batman," starring Robert Pattinson, managed to give a little glimmer of hope to both by grossing $128.5 million in North America, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The latest relaunch of the 80-year-old comic book character is well above Warner Bros.' conservative estimates going into the weekend, which had the film pegged for a debut in the $90 million range. It's the best opening of 2022 and the second best of the pandemic, though it's more than $100 million shy of "Spider-Man: No Way Home's" still unbelievable $260 million opening weekend in December.

"The Batman" opened this weekend exclusively in theaters in 4,217 locations on over 12,500 screens in North America. There were some fan events on Tuesday and Wednesday leading into Thursday pre-shows in about 3,300 locations. All told, by the close of Friday, "The Batman" had already grossed $57 million. No other major studio dared compete with their own new film.

Internationally, "The Batman" earned $120 million, bringing its global total to $248.5 million. Warner Bros. halted its release in Russia following the country's invasion of Ukraine, saying that the company would monitor the situation as it evolves. Many major studios made similar decisions with their films.

## UN envoy Angelina Jolie in Yemen

**CAIRO** (AP)—Hollywood actress Angelina Jolie on Sunday visited war-wrecked Yemen to show solidarity with displaced families in hopes of mobilizing support for an incoming fundraising conference, the United Nations said.

Jolie, who is special envoy for the U.N. on refugee issues, landed in the southern coastal city of Aden to meet with families and refugees there. Aden is the seat of the internationally recognized government.

The U.N. refugee agency said it hopes that Jolie's visit would draw attention to growing humanitarian needs in Yemen, the Arab World's poorest country, ahead of the annual High Level Pledging Conference for Yemen on March 16.

"As we continue to watch the horrors unfolding in Ukraine and call for an immediate end to the conflict and humanitarian access, I am here in Yemen to support people who also desperately need peace. The situation here is one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world," Jolie said in a post on her Instagram account.

Yemen has been convulsed by civil war since 2014, when the Iran-backed Houthi rebels took control of the capital, Sanaa, and much of the country's north, forcing the government to flee to the south, then to Saudi Arabia. A Saudi-led coalition, backed at the time by the United States, entered the war in 2015 to try to restore Yemen's government to power.

The conflict has since become a regional proxy war that has killed more than 150,000 people, including over 14.500 civilians, according to 2022 data from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Project. It also created the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

According to the U.N. refugee agency, about 66% of Yemen's 30 million people rely on humanitarian assistance for their daily survival, including over 4.2 million displaced people and 102,000 refugees and asylum-seekers.

The head of the World Food Program, David Beasley, told The Associated Press last month that around 13 million people were heading toward starvation in Yemen due to the protracted conflict and lack of funding.

## Dysfunctional relationships collide in workplace affair

**DEAR ABBY:** I'm a supervisor at my job and have feelings for a married man who also works here. He's lonely and looks to me for attention, companionship, sex and to listen to his troubles. We have only had sex once, but I know I cannot continue this "relationship."

It breaks my heart because I care for him deeply, and IF he was single, this is someone I could actually have a relationship with. I have already told him I won't accept any more of his offers to walk me home, and to quit texting me. He's open with his wife regarding dating other people. It seems she's also "talking" to another man outside of their marriage.

Am I delusional to think he will leave her for me? Would he have the same problems with me that he has with her? He has difficulty expressing his emotions, but I think he still loves his wife. I know their marriage is broken, and it's not my job to fix it for them or to push him to choose me over her. It should not have to be this way.

Please, I would appreciate any advice you can offer. By the way, I'm also married, but my husband lives 7,000 miles away. After seven years, his immigration status still needs to be resolved. I'll probably ask him for a divorce because, even though I care about him, I'm no longer in love with the man I married. He knows I have been dating someone because I told him.

**IN KNOTS IN NEW YORK**

**DEAR IN KNOTS: You didn't mention whether there are policies in your business about fraternizing, but if there are, then what you have been doing could get you fired. You have already started disengaging from this office romance, so please continue to do that.**

**Because of the unique circumstances of your marriage, you have some serious decisions to make. Do not drag your co-worker into it. IF there is the possibility of a future with him, he also needs to decide if he is satisfied with the status quo before making any other commitments. I know you are lonely, but for your sake and his, back off.**

■■■■

**DEAR ABBY:** My husband of more than 20 years has taken to hiding decorative accessories that he doesn't like. An example: A designer bowl set packaged in a box suddenly disappeared from the cupboard. The plug-in air freshener from my home office also went missing. A lamp I moved from the living room to the foyer appeared on my bookcase two hours later. My complaints fall on deaf ears. His favorite coffee mug and iPad are about to mysteriously vanish. Can you talk some sense into him?

**HIDE AND SEEK IN GEORGIA**

**DEAR HIDE: Is this recent behavior, or has your husband been hiding things all during your marriage? If it's recent, your husband may need a medical checkup, because what you are describing can be a symptom of dementia. If he's mentally fit, you two need to work on sharpening your communication skills and, perhaps, agree that before any more items are brought into the home the TWO of you share, they're not something either of you will hate.**

## DEAR ABBY

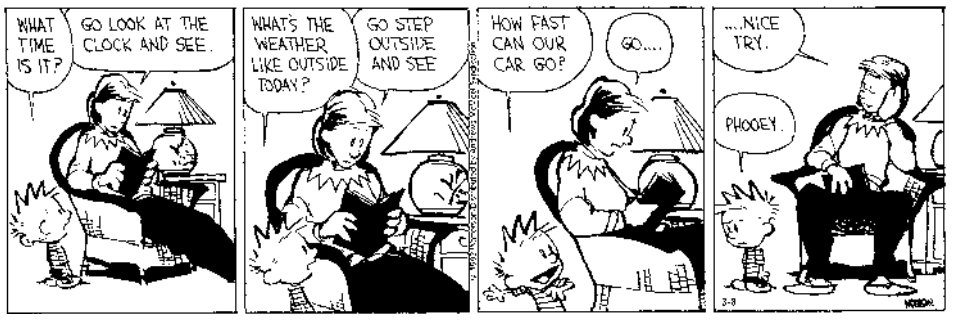
By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*

# Pastimes

## Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

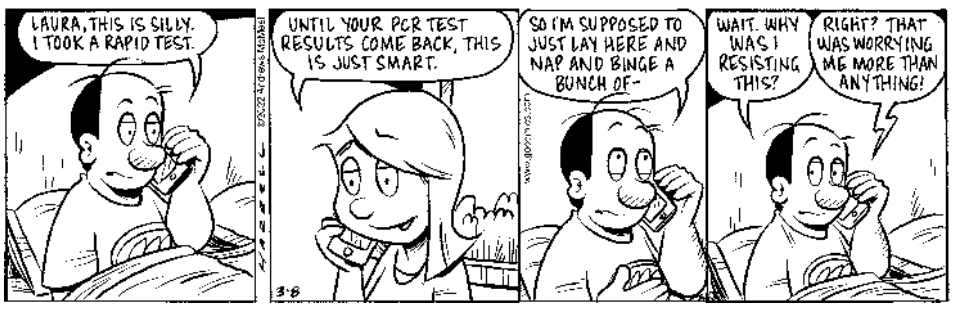

WHAT TIME IS IT?
GO LOOK AT THE CLOCK AND SEE.
WHAT'S THE WEATHER LIKE OUTSIDE TODAY?
GO STEP OUTSIDE AND SEE
HOW FAST CAN OUR CAR GO?
GO....
...NICE TRY.
PHOOEY.

## Garfield®

By Jim Davis

## Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


LAURA, THIS IS SILLY. I TOOK A RAPID TEST.
UNTIL YOUR PCR TEST RESULTS COME BACK, THIS IS JUST SMART.
SO I'M SUPPOSED TO JUST LAY HERE AND NAP AND BINGE A BUNCH OF-
WAIT. WHY WAS I RESISTING THIS?
RIGHT? THAT WAS WORRYING ME MORE THAN ANYTHING!

## The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

OH, TODAY IS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY.
I'M GOING TO GO OUT OF MY WAY TO NOT SAY ANYTHING THAT COULD BE TAKEN AS CHAUVINISTIC OR SEXIST.
YOUR FOREHEAD IS SWEATING.
LOCK ME IN THE CLOSET WITH A 6-PACK AND A "BAYWATCH" CALENDAR.

## CROSSWORD

*By Eugene Sheffer*

**ACROSS**

1 PC programs
5 Greek cross
8 Prefix with byte
12 "Got it"
13 New England cape
14 Med. plan options
15 Yuletide dessert
17 Tears
18 Have debts
19 Bluish-purple
21 Rock
24 Castor's mother
25 Dictionary entry
26 Labyrinth creature
30 Lyricist Gershwin
31 "... and — a good night"
32 — -Magnon
33 Government department
35 Bell sound
36 New Mexico resort
37 Soup server
38 Hedy of Hollywood
41 DIY buy
42 Elliptical
43 Nutritional needs
48 New York's — Field
49 "Hail, Caesar!"
50 Actor Sharif
51 Job-safety org.
52 Born abroad?
53 Kissers

**DOWN**

1 Goal
2 Chi follower
3 Signing need
4 Brief time
5 Carton sealer
6 Blackbird
7 In an erratic way
8 Gullet
9 Actor Jannings
10 Lariat
11 Admin. aide
16 Farm female
20 Pop star
21 Do laps
22 Spelling or Amos
23 North African port
24 Tale tellers
26 Train operator
27 Scored 100 on
28 Russian river
29 Portrayal
31 Despot
34 Roma's land
35 Beat cop's job
37 Recline
38 Bonkers
39 Hertz rival
40 Calc. or trig
41 Leg joint
44 "— had it!"
45 Paris pal
46 Napkin's place
47 Soon-to-be grads

**Solution time: 22 mins.**

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| P | U | B | | S | T | A | I | R | | G | M | S |
| . | S | M | | A | O | R | T | A | | R | F | A |
| N | E | W | S | F | L | A | S | H | | E | A | R |
| | | | R | E | S | | A | R | M | A | N | I |
| E | N | L | I | S | T | | T | A | U | T | | |
| L | E | O | | T | O | G | | H | I | N | G | E |
| M | A | C | S | | Y | U | L | | R | E | A | M |
| O | R | A | N | G | | Y | E | A | | W | I | T |
| | | L | I | L | I | | T | W | I | S | T | S |
| D | E | N | I | E | D | | S | A | D | | | |
| A | X | E | | N | E | W | S | R | O | O | M | S |
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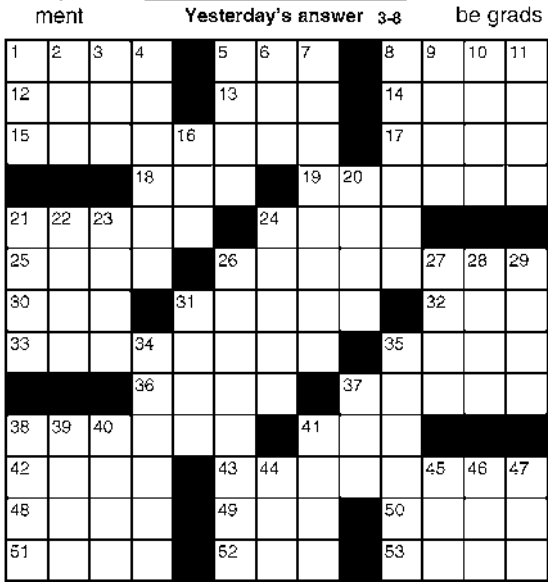
Yesterday's answer 3-8



**STUMPED?** For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** James Van Der Beek, 45; Freddie Prinze Jr., 46; Camryn Manheim, 61; Aidan Quinn, 63.

**Happy Birthday:** Work alone to avoid frustration. You'll find solace in following your dream and pursuing growth and enlightenment. Put your emotions aside. Focus on your needs and what makes you happy, and you'll find the path that leads to peace of mind. A positive attitude will attract people who share your mantra and desire to do as you please. Your numbers are 9, 15, 19, 27, 32, 36, 42.

**ARIES** *(March 21-April 19):* Emotions will play heavy on your mind. Get your facts straight. Making assumptions will bring you down. Focus on the positive, and put your time and effort into personal growth and self-improvement. A little love will go a long way. ✪✪✪

**TAURUS** *(April 20-May 20):* Do what's necessary, and don't look back. Choose to use the element of surprise; keep your plans a secret until you are ready to present and promote what you are doing. Put anger aside; do what pleases you. ✪✪✪

**GEMINI** *(May 21-June 20):* Don't get lost in someone else's dream. Think matters through, and do what works for you. Follow the path that feels comfortable, make the adjustments that will secure your beliefs. Personal improvements will spice up your life. ✪✪✪

**CANCER** *(June 21-July 22):* A creative approach to your responsibilities will help you achieve what you set out to do without begrudging the task. The impression you make will encourage others to find a way to make a difference and have an impact on others. ✪✪✪✪

**LEO** *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Stick to your plan. Don't deviate because someone is waffling or confused. Follow through and tie up any loose ends that might slow down your pursuit. Pay attention to your health and well-being, and do something with someone you love. ✪✪✪✪

**VIRGO** *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Concentrate on perfection. Make physical changes that make you feel good about the way you look. Information you receive or something you learn will encourage you to make a move -- or it could change the way you think about someone. ✪✪

**LIBRA** *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Research and proceed with a project that adds to your comfort. Express your feelings, and make decisions that will bring you closer to someone you love. You can lower your overhead if you share your expenses with more people. ✪✪✪✪✪

**SCORPIO** *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* A friend or relative will have an impact on the decisions you make. Take the initiative by putting some muscle behind something you want to achieve. Look for an innovative plan that suits your needs and encourages positive change. ✪✪✪

**SAGITTARIUS** *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Keep your eye on the ball. Refuse to let someone beat you at your own game. Slow down, think and do things right the first time. How you handle others and take care of yourself will determine how far you get. ✪✪✪

## EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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**CAPRICORN** *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Emotional problems will surface if you make changes at home that someone doesn't like. Get the go-ahead before you take the liberty to make decisions that affect others. Let your experience be your guide to a better future and rewarding relationships. ✪✪✪✪✪

**AQUARIUS** *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Pay attention to detail, the way you present yourself and your plans, and to any money or health concerns that arise. Leave nothing to chance or up to someone else. Take responsibility to do what's best for you. ✪✪

**PISCES** *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Get your money matters in order. Budget for and initiate your plans. A change will play in your favor and give you hope for better days ahead. Think big, but set boundaries to ensure you don't lose sight of your destination. ✪✪✪✪

**Birthday Baby:** You are friendly, original and enthusiastic. You are sensitive and indomitable.

*✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.*

## SUDOKU

**Conceptis Sudoku** *By Dave Green*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2 | | | 6 | | | 7 | |
| 8 | | | 1 | | | 2 | | |
| | | 9 | | | 3 | | | 4 |
| | 9 | | | 1 | | | 6 | |
| 3 | | | | | | 7 | | |
| | | 1 | | | 7 | | | 2 |
| | 7 | | | 2 | | | 9 | |
| 5 | | | 9 | | | 1 | | |
| | | 3 | | | 1 | | | 6 |

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/08

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

**Yesterday's Answer**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 4 |
| 8 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 5 | 2 |
| 4 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 8 |
| 6 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 9 |
| 3 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 5 |
| 2 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| 7 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 1 |
| 5 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 7 |

Difficulty Level ★ 3/8

## WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

**HOW TO PLAY:** All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

**ANIMAL-THEMED VACATIONS** Solution: 7 letters

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | R | N | I | H | P | L | O | D | I | V | I | N | G | N |
| N | D | A | R | E | T | L | E | H | S | N | W | E | A | L |
| G | A | V | I | R | N | E | J | E | U | O | R | C | V | A |
| N | S | T | E | N | F | O | L | S | L | C | I | A | I | G |
| I | Y | S | U | N | F | I | I | F | H | L | V | L | E | O |
| D | E | T | O | R | T | O | I | S | E | A | E | P | W | O |
| D | K | P | S | P | A | U | R | P | R | F | R | O | R | N |
| E | N | B | E | A | R | L | R | E | D | U | O | K | A | I |
| L | O | R | U | N | N | T | I | E | S | D | C | G | N | A |
| S | M | T | C | S | G | O | H | S | S | T | Ⓚ | X | G | T |
| C | B | I | S | O | N | U | O | T | T | E | Ⓡ | S | E | N |
| U | U | G | E | L | Z | R | I | L | E | M | Ⓐ | C | R | U |
| B | S | E | R | O | E | S | I | N | S | I | Ⓟ | A | K | O |
| A | H | R | O | E | C | O | S | Y | S | T | E | M | S | M |
| F | I | S | H | I | N | G | F | L | A | M | I | N | G | O |

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Adventures, Bear, Bison, Bush, Camel, Desert, Diving, Dolphin, Ecosystem, Excursion, Falcon, Feed, Fishing, Flamingo, Herds, Hogs, Lagoon, Lion, Monkeys, Mountain, Naturalist, Oxabis, Otters, Park, Pelican, Penguins, Place, Rainforest, Ranger, Reptiles, Rescues, River, Scuba, Shark, Shelter, Sledding, Tigers, Tortoise, Tours, View, Wolf, Woods, Zoos

**Yesterday's Answer: Mesopotamia**

To purchase **THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 47 through 60** order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

# Middleton, Bucks rally to beat short-handed Suns, 132-122

**MILWAUKEE** (AP)—Khris Middleton scored a season-high 44 points, Jrue Holiday had 17 of his 24 points in the fourth quarter and the Milwaukee Bucks rallied to beat the short-handed Phoenix Suns 132-122 on Sunday.

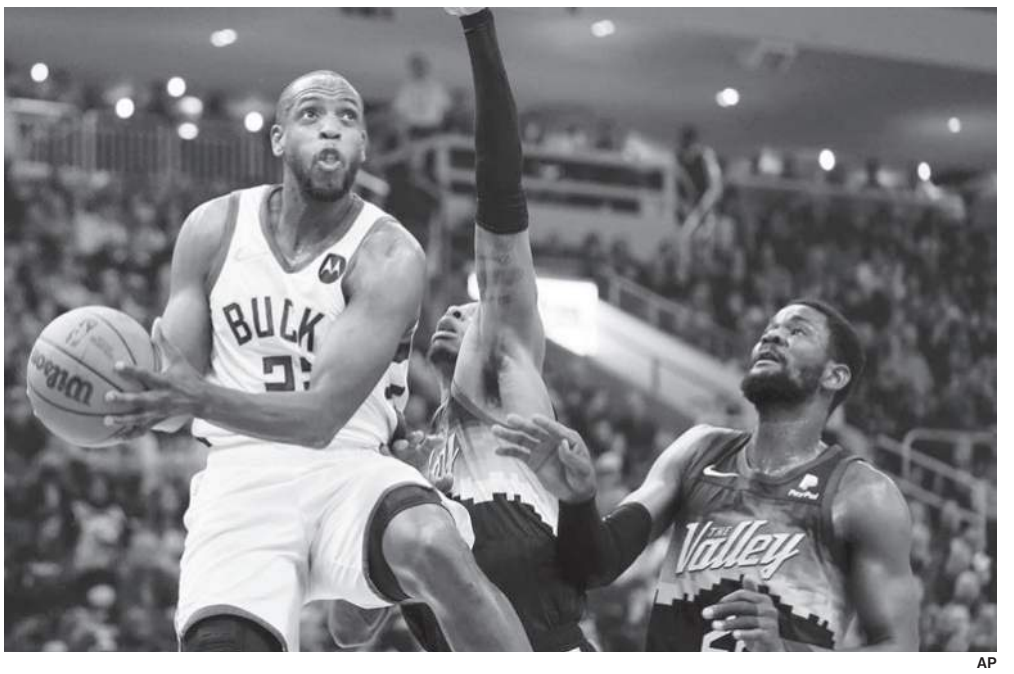
Milwaukee outscored Phoenix 12-1 over the last three minutes to win in the Suns' first visit since Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 50 points in a 105-98 Game 6 victory gave the Bucks their first NBA title in 50 years. In their only previous matchup this season, the Suns won 131-107 in Phoenix on Feb. 10.

The NBA-leading Suns were playing without their usual All-Star starting backcourt of Devin Booker and Chris Paul. Booker missed his third straight game due to the NBA's health and safety protocols. Paul broke his right thumb Feb. 16.

Phoenix also was missing Cam Johnson, two days after he scored 38 points in a 115-114 victory over the New York Knicks. Johnson has a bruised right quadriceps.

The Bucks won their fourth straight as they completed arguably their toughest three-game stretch of the season. In each of those three games, they came from behind down the stretch.

Antetokounmpo had 19 points, 13 rebounds and six assists in 31 minutes before fouling out with 1:12 left. Deandre Ayton led the Suns with 30 points. Cam Payne had 23.



AP

Milwaukee Bucks' Khris Middleton shoots past Phoenix Suns' Deandre Ayton and Torrey Craig during the first half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, March 6, 2022, in Milwaukee .

### Celtics 126, Nets 120

In Boston, Jayson Tatum scored a season-high 54 points — 34 of them in the second half — and Boston overcame a rare appearance of both Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving in Brooklyn's lineup.

Durant played in his second game since mid-January and scored 37 to become the 23rd player in NBA history to reach 25,000 points. Irving joined him for just the fourth time all season, scoring 19 in his first game in three weeks and his first in Boston since he was pelted with a water bottle during the playoffs.

Jaylen Brown scored 21 points for Boston. He was cleared to return after testing his sprained ankle pregame.

### Rockets 123, Grizzlies 112

In Houston, Kevin Porter Jr. scored 29 points, Christian Wood added 28 points and 13 rebounds and Houston beat Memphis to end a 12-game losing streak.

Porter scored 19 of his 22 second-half points in the third quarter to help Houston overcome a 10-point halftime deficit. Wood has scored at least 20 points in three games.

Jalen Green added 24 points and eight rebounds, and Eric Gordon had 12 points in the Rockets' first victory since beating Cleveland on Feb. 2.

Desmond Bane scored 28 points, and Ja Morant added 22 points and six assists for Memphis, coming off a home victory Saturday night over Orlando. Steven Adams had season-high 23 points and finished with 12 rebounds.

### Nuggets 138, Pelicans 130, OT

In Denver, Nikola Jokic scored 30 of his 46 points in the fourth quarter and overtime and Denver rallied after squandering an early 21-point lead to beat New Orleans.

Jokic hit two free throws to tie it with 3.2 second remaining in regulation and then sealed it in OT with a 3-pointer with 1:30 left. His big night led to an improbable win in which coach Michael Malone was ejected late in the third quarter, the team completely unraveling and then regrouping down the stretch.

Jokic, the reigning NBA MVP also had 12 rebounds and 11 assists for his league-leading 17th triple-double of the season.

Brandon Ingram had 38 points for New Orleans. The Pelicans had won four in a row.

### Wizards 133, Pacers 123

In Washington, Kristaps Porzingis scored 25 points in his first game for Washington to help the Wizards beat Indiana.

Porzingis returned from a right knee bone bruise and played for the first time since the Wizards acquired him from Dallas in a trade last month. It was his first game overall since Jan. 29.

Kyle Kuzma added 23 points for the Wizards. Malcolm Brogdon scored 27 points Indiana.

### Jazz 116, Thunder 103

In Oklahoma City, Bojan Bogdanovic made a franchise-record 11 3-pointers and scored 35 points to help Utah beat Oklahoma City.

Bogdanovic attemped 18 3-pointers. Donovan Mitchell had 24 points and 10 assists, and Jordan Clarkson added 20 points for the Jazz.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 33 points, eight assists and seven rebounds for Oklahoma City.

### Cavaliers 104, Raptors 96

In Cleveland, rookie Evan Mobley had 20 points and 17 rebounds, Lauri Markkanen scored 22 points and Cleveland widened its lead over Toronto in the Eastern Conference.

The Cavs won for just the second time in eight games.

Pascal Siakam scored 24 points for Toronto.

### Knicks 116, Clippers 93

In Los Angeles, RJ Barrett had 24 points and nine rebounds and the Knicks dominated the Los Angeles Clippers in a 116-93 victory Sunday night that snapped New York's seven-game losing skid.

Immanuel Quickley added 21 points and Cam Reddish had 15 of his 17 points in the fourth for the Knicks, who used big scoring runs to open the second and fourth quarters of a game in which they led by 32 points.

Amir Coffey scored 16 points off the bench to lead the Clippers, whose five-game winning streak ended at the hands of one of the East's worst teams.

The Knicks scored the first 10 points of the fourth, led by Reddish with eight, to extend their lead to 90-68. Barrett was the only starter left in against the Clippers' reserves until he sat down with five minutes remaining.

## NBA BRIEFS

### Bucks' Lopez ready for contact in recovery from back injury

**CHICAGO** (AP)—Milwaukee Bucks center Brook Lopez is ready to participate in contact drills and five-on-five scrimmages after being sidelined since the season opener because of a back injury that required surgery.

"It's another good, positive step for him on his return to play," coach Mike Budenholzer said before the Bucks' game Friday night in Chicago.

The 33-year-old Lopez played 28 minutes and had eight points, five rebounds and three blocks in a season-opening victory over the Brooklyn Nets. The 7-footer averaged 12.3 points, 5.0 rebounds and 1.5 blocks last season while helping the Bucks win the NBA title.

Budenholzer also said Milwaukee hopes to get guard George Hill (sore neck) back in the next week. He has been sidelined since Jan. 28.

Guard Pat Connaughton, meanwhile, "still has a ways to go" in his recovery from surgery on his right finger, Budenholzer said. Connaughton was hurt fouling Chris Paul on a drive to the basket in a 131-107 loss at Phoenix on Feb. 10. Connaughton was expected to miss four weeks.

### Suns' Booker out, enters NBA's health and safety protocol

**PHOENIX** (AP)—All-Star guard Devin Booker has entered the NBA's health and safety protocol and will miss the Phoenix Suns' game against the Portland Trail Blazers on Wednesday night.

The Suns made the announcement at the team's shootaround.

Booker is a three-time All-Star and the team's leading scorer, averaging 25.6 points, 5.2 rebounds and 4.6 assists. The 25-year-old's absence is another blow to the Suns, who are also missing fellow All-Star guard Chris Paul.

Paul broke his thumb on Feb. 16 and could miss the rest of the regular season, though the team is hopeful he'll return before the playoffs. The Suns have struggled without Paul, losing two of three games. Phoenix has the best record in the NBA at 49-12 and is trying to claim the top spot in the Western Conference playoff race.

The Suns have a 6 1/2-game lead over the Golden State Warriors with about 20 games left in the regular season.

### Sixers sign veteran DeAndre Jordan as backup center

**PHILADELPHIA** (AP)—Veteran center DeAndre Jordan signed with the Philadelphia 76ers on Thursday, days after being released by the Los Angeles Lakers.

The 33-year-old Jordan joins Paul Millsap as a backup center for the Sixers, who dealt Andre Drummond to Brooklyn as a part of the multiplayer trade that sent Ben Simmons to the Nets in exchange for James Harden last month. Terms of the deal were not released.

The 6-foot-11 Jordan appeared in 32 games with the Lakers, starting 19. He averaged 4.1 points and 5.4 rebounds in 12.8 minutes.

Jordan's arrival reunites him with Philly's Doc Rivers, who was his coach while with the Los Angeles Clippers.

In 964 career NBA games with the Lakers, Brooklyn, New York, Dallas and the Clippers, Jordan averaged 9.2 points, 10.4 rebounds, 1.0 assists and 1.5 blocks. A 13-year veteran, Jordan is the NBA's leader in career field-goal percentage at 674 and is the only player in league history to shoot at least 70% in multiple seasons, accomplishing the feat four times.

Also, the Sixers released Willie Cauley-Stein from his 10-day contract.

# WNBA's Brittney Griner arrested in Russia on drug charges

By DOUG FEINBERG
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

WNBA All-Star Brittney Griner was arrested last month at a Moscow airport after Russian authorities said a search of her luggage revealed vape cartridges.

The Russian Customs Service said Saturday that the cartridges were identified as containing oil derived from cannabis, which could carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. The customs service identified the person arrested as a player for the U.S. women's team and did not specify the date of her arrest. Russian media reported the player was Griner, and her agent, Lindsay Kagawa Colas, did not dispute those reports.

"We are aware of the situation with Brittney Griner in Russia and are in close contact with her, her legal representation in Russia, her family, her teams, and the WNBA and NBA," Kagawa Colas said Saturday. "As this is an ongoing legal matter, we are not able to comment further on the specifics of her case but can confirm that as we work to get her home, her mental and physical health remain our primary concern."

On Saturday, the State Department issued a "do not travel" advisory for Russia because of its invasion of Ukraine and urged all U.S. citizens to depart immediately, citing factors including "the potential for harassment against U.S. citizens by Russian government security officials" and "the Embassy's limited ability to assist" Americans in Russia.

Griner, who plays for the WNBA's Phoenix Mercury, has played in Russia for the last seven years in the winter, earning over $1 million per season — more than quadruple her WNBA salary. She last played for her Russian team UMMC Ekaterinburg on Jan. 29 before the league took a two-week break in early February for the FIBA World Cup qualifying tournaments.

More than a dozen WNBA players were playing in Russia and Ukraine this winter, including league MVP Jonquel Jones and Courtney Vandersloot and Allie Quigley of the champion Chicago Sky. The WNBA confirmed Saturday that all players besides Griner had left both countries.

The 31-year-old Griner has won two Olympic gold medals with the U.S., a WNBA championship with the Mercury and a national championship at Baylor. She is a seven-time All-Star.

"Brittney Griner has the WNBA's full support and our main priority is her swift and safe return to the United States," the league said in a statement.

# MLB reacts angrily to locked-out players, season still off

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Major League Baseball reacted angrily to the latest offer by locked-out players when bargaining resumed Sunday, accusing the union of backtracking and showing no sign of a breakthrough to get the derailed season back on track.

The squabbling sides talked for 95 minutes on the 95th day of the lockout, largely restating their positions to each other. Talks broke off Tuesday after nine days of negotiations in Jupiter, Florida, and Commissioner Rob Manfred canceled the first two series of the season for each team, a total of 91 games.

If Manfred cancels two additional series through April 13 and 14, he would wipe out 93 more games and increase the total to 184. That would move to the verge of threatening players with the loss of service time and delayed free agency.

This was the first meeting since Tuesday. Manfred was in the MLB offices Sunday but did not attend the bargaining session, aimed at starting the first season delayed by labor strife since 1995.

The union followed the four-day recess by putting many of its proposals in writing.

"We were hoping to see movement in our direction to give us additional flexibility and get a deal done quickly," MLB spokesman Glen Caplin said. "The players' association chose to come back to us with a proposal that was worse than Monday night and was not designed to move the process forward. On some issues, they even went backwards. Simply put, we are deadlocked. We will try to figure out how to respond, but nothing in this proposal makes it easy."

AP

Major League Baseball Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem, left, Senior Vice President Patrick Houlihan, center, and Executive Vice President Morgan Sword, right, arrive at the office of the players' association in New York for labor negotiations, Sunday, March 6, 2022.

Trying to resolve baseball's second-longest labor stoppage, the sides remained far apart on luxury tax, minimum salaries and the proposed bonus pool for pre-arbitration eligible players. The union lowered its starting point for the bonus pool by $5 million to $80 million but left its proposals for the luxury tax and minimum salary unchanged.

Players declined to publicly respond to MLB but have maintained they withdrew their proposals for expanded free agency and arbitration and decreased revenue sharing while reducing their request on the bonus pool from an original $120 million. They also have offered to agree to uniform and helmet advertising.

After the main session, Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem and union chief negotiator Bruce Meyer held a one-on-one meeting. Players suggested the sides meet again Monday, and MLB told the union it would get back with a decision on whether to meet.

Among the few areas with new proposals, players said a fast-track competition committee should include four union appointees, six management members and one umpire. The group would consider rules changes for no earlier than 2023 covering a pitch clock of 14 seconds with no runners on base and 19 seconds with runners on, limiting defensive shifts and using larger bases, and it would be able to recommend changes during the offseason with 45 days' notice for implementation.

MLB last week proposed that the committee include six management officials, two union representatives and one umpire. Currently, management can only change rules with union consent or unilaterally with one year of notice.

Players said they will not allow the committee to consider one topic MLB asked to be included: robots to call balls and strikes.

The union offered to increase the postseason from 10 teams to 12 but said they are willing to discuss management's desire for 14 if MLB would consider a "ghost win" in the first round, which management isn't interested in. The higher seeds would open the best-of-five playoff with a 1-0 series lead.

Players want to raise the luxury tax threshold from $210 last season to $238 million this year, $244 million in 2023, $250 million in 2024, $256 million in 2025 and $263 million in 2026. MLB is at $220 million in each of the next three seasons, $224 million in 2025 and $230 million in 2026.

Tax rates would remain unchanged and direct amateur draft pick compensation for free agents would be eliminated.

The union lowered its plan for the pre-arbitration bonus pool from $85 million but asked for $5 million annual increases over the remainder of the deal. MLB last offered $30 million, up from $25 million, with no annual increase, and suggested the union had orally floated a figure of lower than $80 million when the sides discussed possible trade-offs Monday night.

As part of an overall agreement, players agreed to withdraw their proposed expansion of salary arbitration for players with at least two years of service but less than three.

Players maintained their proposed minimum salary at $725,000 this year, $745,000 in 2023, $765,000 in 2024 and increases during the following two years based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners. Owners have offered $700,000, with $10,000 annual increases.

# Duke's Coach K turns focus to next steps after UNC loss

**DURHAM, N.C.** (AP)—Mike Krzyzewski's final home game at Duke had just ended in an unexpected defeat to the Blue Devils' fiercest rival. The time had come for the school to hold its postgame on-court ceremony in Krzyzewski's honor.

Only, the retiring Hall of Famer was still thinking about Saturday's 94-81 loss to North Carolina.

"I'm sorry about this afternoon," he began, then waved off cheers from the fans. "It was unacceptable. Today was unacceptable, but the season has been very acceptable. And I'll tell you: this season isn't over, all right?"

It was a slightly awkward moment to start of the ceremony, yet a sign that the 75-year-old coach was already thinking and driven about what's still to come: a maximum of nine games left for the No. 4 Blue Devils with chances to win the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament and a sixth NCAA championship.

"It's not my last game — it's my last game in Cameron," he told reporters afterward. "But it seemed like it was your last game. ... So many people are saying great things about you and whatever, and you say, 'It's not over yet.'"

The focus had been on Krzyzewski all week leading up to the rivalry game that was an even bigger spectacle than usual.

It drew more than 90 former players who participated in a pregame photo with their coach, taken from the Cameron rafters. And there were other celebrities in the building.

According to the school, the guest list for Krzyzewski's going-away party included comedian Jerry Seinfeld, actor/comedian Ken Jeong, NBA commissioner Adam Silver, Apple chief executive officer Tim Cook, quarterback Kyler Murray of the NFL's Arizona Cardinals, former NFL players Terrell Owens and Todd Gurley, record producer 9th Wonder and coach Nick Nurse of the NBA's Toronto Raptors.

AP

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski listens while being honored following the team's NCAA college basketball game against North Carolina in Durham, N.C., Saturday, March 5, 2022.

There was also a sighting of retired NBA great Dirk Nowitzki, who took a walkthrough of the Duke practice facility earlier Saturday and ran into current player Wendell Moore Jr. Moore quickly asked for a photo with the former world champion.

The buzz turned to disappointment by the end of the game as Krzyzewski left the court to talk to his team in the locker room. But the seats in Cameron remained full as fans awaited his return for the school's postgame ceremony, which included Krzyzewski holding his wife Mickie's left hand while everyone watched a presentation on the videoboard about Krzyzewski's long run of success in Cameron.

The ceremony ended with Krzyzewski's family, children and grandchildren included, at midcourt as he addressed the crowd a second time.

"For my entire family, all these munchkins here, thank you," Krzyzewski said. "This has been so ..."

Krzyzewski trailed off, offering a wave as the cheers began to erupt. Then he and his family began walking off the court a final time, with the coach giving a few claps and a thumbs-up along the way.

His time at Cameron may be over, but there's still work ahead.

# NFL combine will help clear up battle to be No. 1 draft pick

**INDIANAPOLIS** (AP)—Kayvon Thibodeaux looked like a lock to be this year's top NFL draft pick — until Aidan Hutchinson played his way into the conversation.

Now, with eight weeks until draft night, offensive linemen Ikem "Ickey" Ekwonu and Evan Neal are in the debate, too.

This four-man race to the top has become a hot topic at this week's annual scouting combine and has rekindled a familiar question: Who's No. 1? With no quarterbacks likely to be selected right away, the guys in the trenches are the favorites.

"You have to take the player you think is the best fit for the organization and makes the biggest difference," Jacksonville Jaguars general manager Trent Baalke said earlier this week in Indianapolis. "If that's an offensive tackle, you do it. If it's an edge rusher, you do it. This draft has a lot of unique players. There may not be that clear No. 1, but there are a lot of good football players at the top."

Baalke's job is to sort it all out in a draft that comes with several unique features.

First off, Baalke is drafting first for the second straight year; no team other than Cleveland has held that distinction since 1988. The Browns picked No. 1 in 1999-2000 and 2017-18.

Plus, the Jags already have their franchise quarterback after taking Trevor Lawrence last year. Lawrence's presence presumably gives Baalke the option of adding either a coveted pass-rushing cornerstone, a massive pass protector who can keep Lawrence upright and healthy for years to come, or a trade that could fill multiple holes.

The one seemingly virtual certainty: A seven-year run of quarterbacks going first or second will end. None is likely to even make the conversation.

Until recently, Thibodeaux, the All-American out of Oregon, appeared to be the odds-on favorite. He had seven sacks last season despite missing 2 1/2 games with a sprained ankle that slowed him through some other games. But with his stock apparently waning amid questions about his consistency from play to play, Thibodeaux went on the offensive Friday.

"I can't really compare it to other guys and what they do because I know that I have great teams that I went up against, and I had a lot of great opportunities to show what I can do," he said, describing his aggressive style.

If Thibodeaux's slide continues, Hutchinson could emerge as the best.

The former Michigan star broke the school's single-season record with 14 sacks, led the Wolverines to a Big Ten title and their first playoff appearance while becoming the third defensive player to finish as the Heisman Trophy runner-up. He did it all after recovering from a fractured right ankle that ended his 2020 season.

AP

Michigan defensive lineman Aidan Hutchinson speaks during a press conference at the NFL football scouting combine in Indianapolis, Friday, March 4, 2022.

Just don't expect Hutchinson to make the pitch. He'd rather let his play suffice.

"I've been playing football for a long time, so I know what pressure is, I know the type of player I am and that calms me a little bit," he said. "I think we're all trying to be the best players we can be and whichever team picks us is going to get a good player."

The bigger surprise might be the recent emergence of Ekwonu and Neal, though it certainly makes sense for Jacksonville after the Jags allowed 32 sacks and Lawrence finished near the bottom of the league in passer rating (71.9).

It's not clear yet which player is the best lineman.

Ewkonu got his nickname from a former coach who thought he looked like former Bengals running back Ickey Woods. Last season, Ewkonu was an All-American and the ACC offensive lineman of the year..

He's the son of a doctor who played college basketball, a mother who ran high school track, and at 6-foot-4, 310 pounds seems to have combined the best of both worlds. Only two North Carolina State players have gone No. 1 overall, DE Mario Williams to the Houston Texans in 2006, and QB Roman Gabriel to the Oakland Raiders in the 1962 AFL draft.

"I wouldn't be shocked if I went No. 1 overall," Ewkonu said one day before working out. "I feel like that is something I put the work in for. I feel like when the time comes, I would deserve it."

Neal checked in at 6-7 1/2 and a svelte 337 pounds after arriving on campus at 385. A three-year starter at Alabama, he helped pave the way for two Heisman winners, two straight national championship game appearances, and a 2020 title.

But what really turned heads was his viral video of a box jump. And if Neal's name is called first on April 28, he would be the first Alabama player to earn the honor since Joe Namath was picked by the New York Jets in the 1965 AFL draft. Quarterback/halfback Harry Gilmer was taken No. 1 in 1948 and is the last member of the Crimson Tide selected first in an NFL draft.

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shortened to 10-minute halves.

The Manta Rays, which missed head coach Mike Mercado due to illness, padded their 5-point lead and were still ahead 27-19 when Dela Cruz took matters in his own hands. The Tinian combo guard fired back-to-back treys to put his team back in the ballgame, down by only a deuce, 27-25, with time down to 6:01.

SSHS' Elijah Garcia countered Dela Cruz's triple with a shot from the land of plenty of his own to make it 30-25 and the Manta Rays extended their lead to 6 points on a free throw by Feria at the 5:45 mark of the ballgame.

Little did they know that was the last time they'd put points on the scoreboard, as Dela Cruz went amok. He first double-clutched an 8-footer to make it 31-27 with 3:01 left on the clock. Malinau Palacios then scored on a 12-foot jumper with 1:58 to go, pegging the score at 31-29.

That set up Dela Cruz's high-arching 3-pointer 18 seconds later that proved to be the final score of the championship game. SSHS called timeout following the broadside triple by the Tinian gunner, but Feria's inside foray rolled off the ring and the ensuing scramble for the ball and the Manta Rays' final attempts at salvaging the win went for naught.

Dela Cruz went on to score 26 of the 32 total points of Tinian, while Palacios and David Mendiola added 4 and 2 points, respectively. SSHS was led by the 8 points of Feria and Factor in a losing cause.

The defeat spoiled the Manta Rays' undefeated march to the finals as they topped the eliminations with a 4-0 mark. Tinian finished at 3-1 with their only loss courtesy of their victims in the winner-take-all championship. SSHS advanced to the finals following a 19-17 win over Mount Carmel School, while Tinian escaped MHS, 24-23, in their Final Four contest.

Asked what's the secret of his clutch shooting in the finals, Dela Cruz said it's just all about trusting yourself.

"You just have to have confidence in yourself, you know. The more confidence you have, the better chance your shot would go in. If you don't have confidence in yourself, what's the point? We won back-to-back championships. We deserve it. Hard work pays off!" he said.

The rest of the victorious Tinian team includes Isiah Aldan, Tano King, Frank Santos, Wade Santos, and Colin Dela Cruz.

Tinian head coach Keith Nabors said the team didn't waver in trusting in themselves and that's what led to them winning the championship.

"It's a great feeling the kids bought into the system. Even though it was shortened and all the restrictions due to COVID-19, we got through it and we came out on top. We implemented the system we wanted to put in and a bunch of our younger kids really came through for us," he said.

Nabors said even staring at SSHS' lead, his players didn't wink and just continued to work hard.

"We just told the kids to stay within the system and close out and make sure their area of responsibility and we closed out hard. Seems to me they lost their legs and maybe it's the long game prior. Seems like they lost their legs and we just wanted to push the ball as much as possible."

The longtime Tinian sports organizer also gave kudos to Sir Dela Cruz's shot-making and even labeled him as the best high school players in the Commonwealth.

"Dela Cruz is probably the best high school basketball player in the CNMI, bar none. He's been ballin' since we last won the championship," said Nabors, who was seen hugging his ward immediately following the final buzzer.

He also thanked the Tinian Legislative Delegation, especially Sen. Karl Nabors (R-Tinian) for always being a good supporter of Tinian sports. Ditto for the Public School System and the PSS Athletics Program for pushing through with interscholastic sports despite the ongoing pandemic. Lastly, he also extended his thanks to his players' parents. "We wouldn't have done this without the parents."

**Tinian 32** – Dela Cruz 26, Palacios 4, Mendiola 2.

**SSHS 31** – Feria 8, Factor 8, Racuep 6, Rasig 4, Garcia 3, Claridades 2.

**Scoring by halves:** 17-22, 32-32.

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as raffle prizes like smartphones, hotel stays, meals, and much more.

Registration for this year's tournament is closed as the maximum number of players has been reached. Those who have not registered to play but would like to be placed on a player wait list can contact 237-6780.

The college is asking companies, organizations, or individuals who are interested in sponsoring holes and/or for any in-kind or cash donation to help support the CNMI's post-secondary institution. For more information on how to become a sponsor, please call 237-6780. ***(PR)***

## LAKAY

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quarter, 50-24, as frontliners Zeric Gant and D.J. Ong frolicked inside.

It was more of the same as the second half started with Gant and Ong continuing their domination of MDC and Lakay entered the fourth and final quarter on top, 64-42.

Jet Jandoc and White Capalad then put on the finishing touches of Lakay's wire-to-wire win, as the two combined for 12 markers in the final 10 minutes of the 37-point rout.

Gant led all scorers with 20 markers, while Santos, Ong, and Jandoc dropped at least 10 points apiece in the win.

Earlier, Paradise Realty scored its second win in as many nights after shocking Blue Haus, 85-69, led by the 35 big points of come-backing Dave Sablan. Jaymark De Guzman paced Blue Haus with 18 markers.

In the second game, Frank Ferrer fired 26 points in JTM Corp.'s 90-57 shellacking of Royal Pacific.

### First Game

**Paradise Realty 85** – D. Sablan 35, Lizama 16, Castro 10, Atan 7, Ju. Camacho 6, J. Sablan 5, Basa 4, Ja. Camacho 2.

**Blue Haus 69** – De Guzman 18, Talania 16, Esdrelon 14, De Dios 11, Bernardo 5, Peredo 4, Garcia 1.

**Scoring by quarters:** 18-22, 37-36, 61-49, 85-69.

### Second Game

**JTM Corp. 90** – Ferrer 26, Gontar 13, Directo 13, Dancel 9, Bayna 8, Rosiego 6, Rodriguez 5, Monteverde 4, Lagudo 2, Camacho 2, Broncano 2.

**Royal Pacific 57** – Basi 16, Tabora 10, Fundador 8, Cafon 7, Lazatin 6, Eroch 6, Batulan 5.

**Scoring by quarters:** 24-8, 45-18, 68-44, 90-57.

### Third Game

**Lakay/Islander 95** – Gant 20, Santos 11, Jandoc 11, Ong 10, Basa 9, Natvidad 5, Rabauliman 5, Toribio 2, Quan 2, Palacios 2.

**MDC 58** – Tengco 17, Montes 13, Elchico 10, Klas 8, Apasan 6, De Guzman 2, Sembrano 2.

**Scoring by quarters:** 22-13, 50-24, 64-42, 95-58.

**Middleton, Bucks rally to beat short-handed Suns, 132-122**

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

**NFL combine will help clear up battle to be No. 1 draft pick**

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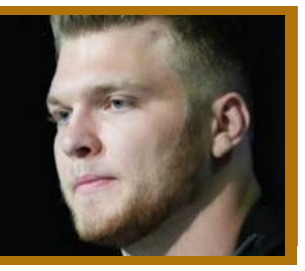



# Back-to-back for Tinian in boys HS hoops

MARK RABAGO

Tinian players and coaches pose with their medals and perpetual plaque after winning the 2021-2022 IT&E Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball Championships last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. Also in photo are Public School System Athletic Program director Nick Gross, right, and Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation president James Lee, left.

MARK RABAGO

Tinian head coach Keith Nabors shared a hug with Sir Dela Cruz after their spine-tingling win against Saipan Southern High School.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Sir Dela Cruz scored 26 points, including the go-ahead triple, to lead a furious Tinian comeback against Saipan Southern High School to win the 2021-2022 IT&E Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball Championships, 32-31, last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

It was the second straight championship for the visitors and they did so even after trailing by 8 points, 27-19, in the early goings of the second half.

The Manta Rays dominated the first half and the start of the second as Ema n Feria dominated the inside and shooters Theron Factor and Andon Rasig dialed it up from 3-point country.

Dela Cruz tried his best to keep Tinian's head above water, pouring in 17 points in the first 10 minutes of the contest, which saw SSHS take a 22-17 advantage at halftime. Due to COVID-19, the Public School System Athletics Program decided to cancel the league and replace it with a three-day weekend tournament and games where

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## Lakay bullies MDC in open caging

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Lakay/Islander decimated Marianas Dental Clinic, 95-58, in the third and last open division game of the Inaugural SCLC Basketball League last Friday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.

Lakay got off on the right foot, getting 7 points and 6 points from Kobe Santos and Preston Basa, respectively, to take a 22-13 lead after the opening quarter.

They doubled up their obviously overmatched opponents in the second

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MARK RABAGO

Lakay/Islander's White Capalad goes up for a layup in their game against Gravity 670 in the open division of the Inaugural SCLC Basketball League last Feb. 26 at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.

## Atkins Kroll offers 2022 Toyota Camry as hole-in-one prize

NMC

Atkins Kroll Saipan has announced that it is offering a brand new 2022 Toyota Camry as a hole-in-one prize in the upcoming 17th Annual NMC Foundation Golf Tournament. In photo is NMC president Galvin Deleon Guerrero with AK Toyota sales representatives and NMC students.

Atkins Kroll has announced that it is offering a brand new 2022 Toyota Camry as a hole-in-one prize in the upcoming 17th Annual NMC Foundation Golf Tournament. The fundraising golf tournament is scheduled for Saturday, March 19, 2022, at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

"Atkins Kroll is proud to support higher education in the Marianas," said Atkins Kroll Saipan general manager Joel Lesh. "We are excited to be part of the NMC Foundation Golf Tournament again and look forward to a successful event this March."

NMC's golf open will be the first major tournament of the year.

"The brand new Camry from Atkins Kroll helps build the anticipation and excitement for our upcoming tournament," NMC president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, EdD, said. "We are extremely grateful to Atkins Kroll for their support of NMC."

NMC's Golf Open will be held on the east course of the Saipan LaoLao Bay Golf and Resort. Showtime is at 6am, and the shotgun start will be at 7am. The tournament will follow a medal play format.

First place winners in the men's Championship, A, B, C, Senior, and Ladies Flights (low gross and low net) will each receive $500, while $300 and $200 will go to the second and third place finishers, respectively. Hole-in-one prizes also include a $5,000 hole-in-one prize from McDonald's, a 2022 Hyundai Kona N-Line from Triple J Motors, and a 2022 Honda Civic Hatchback Sport from Joeten Motors. The tournament will also feature many other items such

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